

MUSICAL IDENTITY: A FORMATION OF SPIRITUAL ART

A Professional Project
presented to
the Faculty of
Claremont School of Theology

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Ministry

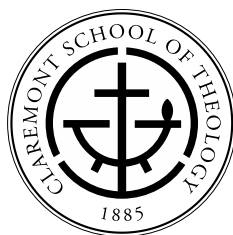
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has been presented to and accepted by the
faculty of Claremont School of Theology in
partial fulfillment of the requirements of the

DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

Faculty Committee

Dean of the Faculty

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DEDICATION PAGE

To my father and mother, Mr. and Mrs. Shelton E. Kilby, Jr.

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation is a project that attempts to provide focus into the legitimacy of musical identity. This project provides broad insights into the material composition of the formless self's identity before the formless self enters the mother's womb. The conditions of origin in the formless self bring established individuation to the formed self after entering the mother's womb in such a way as to defy any disparagement from the status quo or traditional conventions of defining one's musical or artistic identity as equitable. I contend that the presence of certain types of musical oppression exist particularly within the hierarchy of many conservative groups of the dominant culture – in this case, the hierarchy of the Seventh-day Adventist church. It is imperative that a methodology of nonjudgmental descriptions, canonical referencing authority, and the effects of musical predictability be considered when approving or disapproving formalized and vernacular musics.

This document evidences the presence of the following: (1) observations of ethnocentricity and ethnorelativism as categorical themes that instrumentally identify one's acceptance or rejection of musical differences; (2) causations that are used to ostracize and militate against differences that are of the status quo; (3) religious, musical, and tonal symbols that are preserved and born out of certain ancestral worshipful styles, which can or should become liturgical; and (4) the presence of spiritual artistic formation, a mosaic of inclusive kinships that form a united artistic whole - as "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

PREFACE

Preparation for my Doctor of Ministry dissertation project has been in the making for over thirty years. This preparation began during my youth and young adulthood years, as a fledgling pianist. Serving as pianist, organist, or keyboardist for early-morning prayer meetings, divine worship service, ‘Sabbath School’, and youth meetings became the foundational context for my music ministry. My musical identity as a young adult musician began when I transcended to choral conducting. Fascinated with music composition, music orchestration, and vocal SATB ensemble renderings, I developed a need and a curiosity for musical experimentation. The wonderment of chordal harmonies and the fusion or blending of various musical genres catapulted me into the existential world of culture, subculture, and inter-culture. Questions about musical folklore and expression created in me a preoccupation with praise and worship. Researching literature into ethnic musical expression suggested to me a direct connection between certain types of behavior in one’s musical performance and their worship performance. I moved to Southern California with the goal of becoming a film composer. However, Divine intervention designed another plan for my creativity.

Receiving an invitation to become a member of the Seventh-day Adventist (SDA) Media Center in Thousand Oaks, California, my responsibilities included: (1) arranging and composing music as thematic to the prepared sermons of the director/speaker of *Breath of Life* (BOL) – a tele-evangelistic program, one of many television ministries of the SDA Media Center, and (2) performing as a concert pianist for public relations as a tool for enhancing the promotions of the BOL Ministry. Evangelism was very intentional in the goals and design of the ministry.

The BOL telecast staff was very dedicated to reaching men and women all over the world. The operational design of BOL’s evangelism was in some ways influenced by the Billy

Graham Evangelistic Ministries in a manner that manifested a very strong outreach program in which the evangelistic team members visited various high schools with the idea of forming alliances with young people, and forging relationships through the arts. I was responsible for the musical aspects of the presentations, including presenting piano performances, music of the ‘Black Americas’, and presentations regarding film and music. On the creative side of the set design of the telecast, it was my job to enlarge on the theological, historical, and musical themes of each series of programming. For instance, when the executive producer of the telecast produced a program dealing with the blood of Christ during his crucifixion, the program would commence with the career of Dr. Charles Drew, who developed the science of blood plasma, and tie the therapeutic advantages of human life through the transfusion of physical blood. This process exemplified the analogous advantages of Christ’s spiritual blood transfusion in the life of humanity. As music director for the telecast, I was expected to create an atmosphere that was based on the Negro spiritual, “Were You There When They Crucified My Lord?” All of the outreach programs of BOL were related to leading men, women, boys, and girls (regardless of creed, nationality, culture, or ethnicity) to the gospel of Jesus Christ through evangelism. This integration of religion/theology with music ministry became an inherent foundation in my personal and professional ministry. My musical identity in the SDA church organization became identifiable through the melding of religion and the arts.

The South Central Conference of SDA invited me to serve in the president’s cabinet as a pastor, with responsibilities of director of Sabbath Schools, director of Communications, and director of Music Ministry for the entire conference. The geographic location of this conference constituency included Kentucky, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Western Florida (the horn of Florida). My borders of creativity in the music ministry, public relations, and Sabbath

School workshops morphed into preaching and lecturing revivals, seminars, and evangelism to the unreached population, which resulted in the establishment of the Kingsport SDA Church in Kingsport, Tennessee. Again, the integration of religion, music, and theology became the nexus or connection of my ministerial expansion into pastoral ministry.

Receiving a call to pastor the Killeene, Texas and Austin, Texas Alpha SDA Church in the Southwest Regional (SWR) Conference of SDA, my ministry of integrating religion/theology and music ministry with liturgy availed for me a profound sensitivity and respect for culture and ethnicity.

The final chapter in my pastoral ministry would characterize me (at the behest of the SWR Conference executive committee) as the vice president and executive secretary (the legal arm) of the SWR Conference. This constituency embraced the geographic locations of Arkansas, Texas, Oklahoma, Louisiana, and New Mexico. As vice president, my responsibilities included overseeing all ministerial functions of the conference, including conference evangelism; conference/church ministries; church properties within each state; legal matters, including hiring and firing of personnel; and camp meeting ministries, including cafeteria and maintenance of all recreational properties. As a conference administrator (vice president and executive secretary), I received certain executive perks, which allowed me to complete my undergraduate education – a Bachelor's degree in Religion. This degree was an inter-disciplined program that allowed me to not only study religion, but to expand my curiosities into Jewish historical music. Praise and worship in a historical, religious, and musical context would require some external and internal understanding into the cultural, ethnic, and regional music of the Jewish diaspora.

Retiring from the SDA organization, I was immediately invited to become a member of the music department at Wilberforce University – a university under the auspices the African Methodist Episcopal Church – the first African-American institution of higher learning in the United States. Transitioning from full time pastoral/preaching ministries and administration to full time academia was a transformative experience for me. I was appointed to teach not only the applied arts (music composition, orchestration, and arranging), but also the behavioral arts (music and culture). Layering the lectures with excerpts in culture, inter culture, objective culture and subjective culture, I found a more contemplative way of connecting African-American folklore, and individual and collective learned values and behaviors to religion, music, and history. My need for creative explorations into creative theory and music creativity ushered me into graduate school at Union Institute and University, pursuing a Master's degree in Creativity Studies with an emphasis in Issues in African Music.

Receiving a teaching appointment at LaSierra University, I was invited to teach Religion and the Arts in the HMS Richards Divinity School. This discipline integrates theology and musicology in a way that manifests as religion and the arts. Religion and the Arts has been and is presently the bridge that identifies my ministry. It is a ministry shaped by the fellowship of inclusion of all cultures, ethnicities, races, kinships, and people. It is a ministry that promotes the uniqueness of multi-cultural and multi-racial expression (individual and collective). It is a ministry that culminates in *Musical Identity: The Formation of Spiritual Art*.

INTRODUCTION

The reason for conducting this Doctor of Ministry project is to articulate a justifiable, sanctifying, indigenous, and definitive thesis about the plausibility of *Musical Identity: A Formation of Spiritual Art*. My intention is to bring pronouncement to the authenticity of musical identity as a non-negotiable premise in the corporate bodies of the worship community. When I speak of *art* in this context of identity, I am attempting to cast art within the aesthetic beauty, divine crafting, equality of all sentient life forms, and relativism of God's creation. I argue that *Musical Identity: A Formation of Spiritual Art* is materially and creatively sanctified by God, in that all of humanity is made in God's image (Genesis 1:26, 27). Twenty-one years of teaching in religious institutions as pastor, lecturer, administrator, composer arranger, and artist performer have confirmed my experience in recognition of *Musical Identity: A Formation of Spiritual Art*.

There are four imperative themes in this document that forge conversation within the realm of musical identity: (1) observations of ethnocentricity and ethnorelativism as categorical framing that instrumentally identify one's acceptance or rejection of musical differences; (2) causations that are used to ostracize and militate against differences that are of the status quo; (3) religious, musical, and tonal symbols that are preserved and born out of certain ancestral worshipful styles which can or should become liturgical; and (4) the presence of spiritual artistic formation, a mosaic of inclusive kinships that form a united artistic whole – as "faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

Importance of the Problem

The focus on this topic, *Musical Identity: A Formation of Spiritual Art*, emerges from my experience in the SDA church. While the ‘world church’ has a constituency that is multi-racial, multi-ethnic, and inter-cultural, this global church organization holds quite stringently and sometimes stridently to its prideful ethnocentricity. Overtly or covertly, the Church identifies appropriateness according to its institutional taste and values, with no regard for one’s cultural, ethnic, geographical location, national location, or environmental upbringing. This gives rise to institutional musical oppression in the SDA church hierarchy. The bias of the SDA institutional hierarchy is favored in the European conservative model of musical expression.

Sometimes this bias is seen through the acceptance or rejection of those musical instruments that are associated with certain *forms of music* and *forms in music*. The SDA world church organization has an excellent opportunity to divest itself of this type of musical disparagement through its ethnocentrism, and to immerse itself in the understanding of all world musics that represent the cultures and ethnicities of its constituencies. I would suggest a series of ministerial forums that deal with *Musical Identity: A Formation of Spiritual Art* be established across West Coast regions of the church organization, to include the Pacific Union and Southern Conferences of SDA. These forums would give focus to church pastors, church administrators, musicians, and choir members.

Definition of Terms

Art Formation – Leo Tolstoy posits that there are two major reasons for art:

One is that he offers a theory deeply pervaded by the Russian impulse toward unification and communication. Far more important, however, he offers the strongest account available of a view of art that is held by many people—that art succeeds when it arouses

and transmits emotion, when it brings people together and enriches their common humanity.¹

This term (in the context of this document) seems to create its own *art formation*.

Forms in music – “The theoretical and compositional principles of music, i.e., tones, intervals, scales, tonality, consonance and dissonance, meter, rhythm, modulation, sequence, inversion, and all the higher devices of counterpoint.”²

Forms of music – “The existence of certain schemes that govern the overall structure of a composition and were traditionally used in various periods of music history, e.g., the fugue or the sonata.”³

Identity – As *identity* exists as a thread throughout this document, it will appear in different contexts. There is *personal identity*, which brings an emphasis on the personal experience of one’s identity.⁴

William James (according to Gillespie) is seen as a pioneer in the significance of identity. First, he uses *identity* as a signature of who we are; secondly, James uses *identity* in the context of our associations; and thirdly, he uses *identity* as transcendental, focusing on one’s ego. James’s summation of relational elements – transcendental, associational, and substantial qualities⁵ – provides another lens for *identity* – that of one’s material composition.

¹ Leo Tolstoy, “What Is Art?” in *Art and Its Significance*, ed. Stephen David Ross (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1994), 177, 178.

² Willi Apel, *Harvard Dictionary of Music* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1975), 327.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Bailey V. Gillespie, *Dynamics of Religious Conversion: Identity and Transformation* (Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1991), 135.

⁵ William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience*, (1958): 184, quoted in Bailey V. Gillespie, *Dynamics of Religious Conversion: Identity and Transformation* (Birmingham, AL: Religious Education Press, 1991), 136.

Material composition – *Material*, according to the Oxford Dictionary, may be viewed as the matter from which a thing is or can be made; or a person of a specified quality or suitability; while *composition* denotes “the formation or construction” of an individual’s framework.⁶ The *material composition* of an individual could environmentally pose a certain propensity towards how one may view or imagine the Christian God, or Theos of the universe.

Multi-culture – *Theo-musicology* as a borrower of behavioral sciences, appears to suggest that there are not only profiles of individual and or collective behavior, but that this behavior is *culture*, and seems to inhere what “anthropologists Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1963) found [in their investigation], 150 qualitatively distinct definitions of this term scattered throughout the scientific literature . . . [highlights a] broad consensus on two points: (1) that culture is a way of life based on some system of shared meanings; and (2) that it is passed on from generation to generation through this very system.”⁷

Theo-musicology – Jon Spencer posits *theo-musicology* as a musicology that is driven by theology:

Theo-musicology . . . as a theologically informed discipline—is a musicological method for theologizing about the sacred (the religious/churched), the secular (the theistic unreligious/unchurched), and the profane (the atheistic/irreligious)—including sacred and non-sacred music functioning as theomusicotherapy in church and community—principally incorporating methods borrowed from anthropology, sociology, psychology, and philosophy.⁸

⁶ *Oxford Dictionary of English*, s.v. “material,” “composition,” Apple Computer App.

⁷ A. L. Kroeber and C. Kluckhohn, *Culture: A Critical Review of Concepts and Definitions*, (1963): 387, quoted in Marcel Danesi and Paul Perron, *Analyzing Cultures: An Introduction & Handbook* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999), 22.

⁸ Jon Michael Spencer, *Theology of American Popular Music* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1989), v.

Chapter Outline

Chapter 1 of this project will define musical identity and *material composition*, and the dialogue between musician and identity. This context will further attempt to reveal the *individuation* and the self-knowledge of the musician and his identity.

Chapter 2 of this project will define musical identity and *culture*, and how the material composition of individuation will be accepted or rejected by culture. This chapter presents a thorough analysis of how the stages of exclusion and inclusion are manifested in a church society – including those causations that are used to ostracize and militate against differences that are not of the status quo.

Chapter 3 will focus on musical identity, with a prescription for religious education. Identification will be used as a metaphor for defining the organizational presence of music oppression or music liberation. This focus is a means of encapsulating the pedagogy of the liturgical community through the deliberation of oppression and liberation.

Chapter 4 will articulate *Musical Identity: A Formation of Spiritual Art* in the context of motivation, liturgy, space, and worship. Religious art will yield focus in the intra-church community, where the worship community revels in its aesthetically formed beauty and sentience. Religious art will also yield focus in the inter-religious church community, where attempts are made in hosting other faith traditions. Art will manifest in the liturgical programming through fellowship, corporate worship, and infusion of culture and inter-cultural values and patterns of behavior.

The Conclusion section of this project will affirm the inclusive nature of this project, which embraces inclusive language, individual faith, communal faith, and the community's response in worship to God.

SECTION A

MUSICAL IDENTITY:

MATERIAL COMPOSITION AND CULTURE

Chapter 1

MUSICAL IDENTITY

Manifestation of Musical Identity

Musical identity is multifaceted. It can manifest in musical genres of European classical, American Dixie Land, jazz fusion, blues, country, country & western, rhythm & blues, Latin jazz, classical jazz, avant garde, gospel, Black gospel, liturgical, and third stream; and yet none of these descriptions define the true musical identity of an individual or group. I contend that authentic music identity is found in the *material composition* of an individual or group.

Authentic identity in the music realm is usually associated with and/or linked to one thing or another – religion, culture, genre of music, or art – where the entity of material composition inheres definition within *identification*. Identification, on the other hand, finds its summation in the positive consequences of associations, whether personal or institutional. Thus, the material composition of an artistic individual may find evolution or involvement in religious location, academic location, or in a multifaceted contoured environment formed by geographical location, religious location, theological location, academic location, or artistic location.

Material Composition and Relationships

Identity of musicians may be viewed through the prism of their *material composition* and *relationships*. Going deeper into their material composition, it would not be peculiar to find at their core fluidity of conflict, fluidity of cultures, and the ever present awareness of the emotional tension manifested in their religious differences.⁹ Artist's true identities are seldom

⁹ Michelle Lebaron and Venashri Pillay, *Conflict Across Cultures: A Unique Experience of Bridging Differences* (Boston, MA: Intercultural Press, 2006).

recognized critically, except perhaps in one's biographical sketch or resume. Many times musicians only identify themselves within their generic musical renderings, such as classical, jazz, Latin, Black gospel, avant garde, third stream, etc., and how they are received or applauded by the consumer of generic products. It is possible that these musicians have been mistaken by the media's false identity of those who make the music. At best, the community of commerce is only interested in the marketed commercial identity handles, which have no real value in the authentic material compositional identity of these talented people of the city. The material composition of these musicians is not static. This functionality without recognition of their material composition may insist that further inquiry into what Joan Stambaugh in her book describes as, *the formless self*, be visited. How does the formless develop into the formed self?

The Formless Self to the Formed Self

Joan Stambaugh in her book, *The Formless Self*, peers through the lens of Buddhist names to find that "ultimate reality is the *Formless Self*." One of the sayings of Buddha "himself" is his statement that "all things are without self."¹⁰ Stambaugh goes on to say:

Early Buddhism (*Theravada, Hinayana*) was exceedingly concerned with uprooting this firmly entrenched and much cherished view of the self that we cling to so tenaciously. That view of the self is inextricably bound up with the Buddha's two other statements that all things are suffering and all things are impermanent. We ultimately "suffer" because there is no such thing as a permanently enduring self. In fact, one of the lasting insights of the Buddha is that there is no enduring self in anyone or anything at all . . . But there are many fruitful indicators pointing the way to a soteriological, not a conceptual, "solution" "answer."¹¹

Stambaugh references the formless self as dharmas [matter]; where [one] "encounters the myriad dharmas, the ten thousand things of the world and thereby forgets the *self* that one did not

¹⁰ Joan Stambaugh, *Formless Self* (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 1999), xi.

¹¹ Ibid., xi, xii.

find.” Her contention is that *myriad dharmas* not only give *recognition, verification, and confirmation* of one’s pursuits, but there is allowance for “this...body mind [theory] to drop off,”¹² before the Enlightenment. Dharma in Hinduism has to do with the principle of *cosmic order; including virtue, righteousness, and duty*, in accordance with the cosmic order.”¹³ That is to say that the material composition of musicians of great pedagogical acumen find definition in its *formless self*; where it’s true functionality will “become utterly transparent to the myriad things of the world, be they other people, realities of nature, man made things or whatever.”¹⁴

Stambaugh quoted D. T. Suzuki on the self:

It is the Heart indeed that tells us that our own self is a self only to the extent that it disappears into all other selves, non-sentient as well as sentient. Self is not an egotistical “i” or “eye” that we can wave or wink like a wand, and watch it appear!¹⁵

Ludwig Wittgenstein (cited by Stambaugh) said, “The eye (or the self) is at best that with which we see; it is never *what* we see.”¹⁶ The Biblical narrative of Jeremiah reminds us that the creative God said to Jeremiah: “*Before I formed [the formless self] you in the womb I knew you; before you were born [the formless self], I sanctified you, I ordained you a prophet to the nations*” (Jeremiah 1:1, NKJV). The Biblical narrative evidences the presence of the formless self, before birth in the mother’s womb. The reality of the dharmas and the origin of the self, or ourselves, may be amplified through the Genesis account of creation, where it is stated: *And the Lord God “formed” man of the dust of the ground [matter] and breathed into his nostrils the*

¹² Stambaugh, *Formless Self*, xi, xii, 2.

¹³ *Oxford Dictionary of English*, s.v. “Dharma,” Apple Computer App.

¹⁴ Stambaugh, *Formless Self*, 2.

¹⁵ D. T. Suzuki, *Essence of Buddhism*, (1948): 65, quoted in Stambaugh, *Formless Self*, 2.

¹⁶ Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Traktatus Logico-Philosophicus*, (1958):150, quoted in Stambaugh, *Formless Self*.
2.

breath of life; and man became a living being (Genesis 2:7, NKJV). The formless self is shaped in the spiritual matter of the universe, and as the form-less self, it is individualized. This emergence of the whole self into a full person or individual with personality, excellence, and individuation brings its own uniqueness, based on his/her material composition. Carl Jung asserts that the individual of excellence is constrained by the “with-in God” or the “God within,” to look for tributaries that move away from the conventions of society and the status quo of church religiosity, in favor of the spiritual journey.¹⁷ The individual and inner person functions in the immanence and Transcendence of what the Africans call the “sky God”¹⁸ by receiving the spiritual discernment that is only recognized by the Spiritual. This is the whole or the self that audaciously illuminates the communication of God’s will (Romans 6). This *individuation* of the formless self to the formed self brings its true *identity*, a personal identity, a God-given identity, made authentic by his/her self; which is the authentic material composition. The material composition of a human being is manifested in the vibratory consequence of God’s creativity.

Hazrat Inayat Khan, author of *The Music of Life* posits:

Man is not only formed of *vibrations*, but he lives and moves in them; they surround him as the fish is surrounded by water, and he contains them within him as the tank contains water. His different moods, inclinations, affairs successes and failures, and all conditions of life depend upon a certain activity of vibrations, whether these be thought, emotions, or feelings . . . All sensations are caused by a certain grade of activity of vibration. There are two aspects of vibration, *fine* and *gross*, both containing varied degrees; some are perceived by the *soul*, some by the *mind*, and some by the *eyes*. What the soul perceives are the *vibrations of feelings*; what the mind conceives are the *vibrations of the thoughts*; what the eyes see are the *vibrations solidified* from their ethereal state and turned into atoms which appear in the physical world, constituting the elements ether, air, fire, water,

¹⁷ Hugh J. Roberts, “Improvisation, Individuation, and Immanence: Thelonius Monk,” in *Theology of American Popular Music*, ed. Jon Michael Spencer (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1989), 50, 51.

¹⁸ Charles E. Bradford, *Sabbath Roots: The African Connection* (Silver Spring, MD: Ministerial Association of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, 1999), 41.

and earth. The finest vibrations are imperceptible even to the soul. The soul itself is formed of these vibrations; it is their activity which makes it conscious.¹⁹

This is the material composition of the formless self, actualized into the conception of the womb. This is the musician and his or her musical identity. It is the *cause and effect* that motivates the contour, of how musicians change from one place to the next; how they sense direction or the oncoming of danger. Khan puts it this way:

Vibrations can be understood both as *cause* and as *effect*. Vibration causes *movement, rotation, circulation*, but on the other hand it is the rotation of the planets and the circulation of the blood which cause vibration. Thus the cause as well as the effect of all that exists is vibration. Whether a thing is visible or audible, perceptible or imperceptible depends upon the speed of the vibrations. Everything that is visible is audible at the same time and everything that is audible is visible also.²⁰

As we perceive those things that are not seen, there is form. As we perceive those things that are heard, they have their form also. Vibrations are manifested in the context of *rhythm*, as there is oscillation – a phenomenon of *back and forth movement* – which has its own patterns of vibrating. The universal laws of vibrations on any plane are subject to the *laws of rhythm*.

Khan posits on the law of rhythm:

The law of rhythm is a great law which is hidden behind nature. It is in accordance with this law that every *form* is made and that every condition manifests to view. The creation therefore is not merely a phenomenon of vibrations without any restrictions. If there were no rhythm, if it were not for the law of rhythm, we would not have distinct forms and intelligible conditions. There is no movement which has no sound, and there is no sound which has no rhythm. This shows that rhythm is a hidden law of nature. The rising and the setting of the sun, the waxing and the waning of the moon, the regular change of the tides in the sea, and the seasons as they come and go all show rhythm.²¹

¹⁹ Hazrat Inayat Khan, *Music of Life* (New Lebanon, NY: Omega Publications, 2005), 5-7.

²⁰ Khan, *Music of Life*, 7.

²¹ Ibid., 11-13.

The plains of vibrational constituencies, as rhythmic patterns, are symphonically attuned to the great conductor of creation. The knitting of God's dharmas is consistent with God's creativity, the cosmic order of the universe. Birds of the air and fishes of the sea function in a polyphonic syncopation of rhythms that have their own composition. God's dharmas are non-negotiable! Any attempt to dismantle what God has put into order, is not only perversion, it is possibly dangerous. Khan further articulates:

The law of rhythm can be considered as governing four actions: right or wrong rhythm in feeling, right or wrong rhythm in thinking, right or wrong rhythm in speaking, and right or wrong rhythm in acting. Not only hate but even love that is maintained by rhythm will fail; not only an evil thought but even a good one will prove to be disastrous without regard for rhythm. Not only false but even true speech which has no rhythm will prove to be fatal; not only a wrong action but even a right one devoid of rhythm will prove to be out of place.²²

The material composition of human beings has its connection to the creative image and imagination of God. "God said, Let Us make humankind in our image, according to Our likeness; let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, over all the earth over every creeping thing that creeps on the earth. God created man in His *own image* in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them. Then God blessed them" (Genesis 1:26-28 NKJV). Ellen White, author of *The Story of Redemption*, posits:

Very happy were the holy pair [Adam and Eve] in Eden. Unlimited control was given them over every living thing. The lion and the lamb sported peacefully and harmlessly around them, or slumbered at their feet. Birds of every variety of color and plumage flitted among the trees and flowers and about Adam and Eve, while their mellow low-toned music echoed among the trees in sweet accord to the praises of their Creator ... Adam and Eve were charmed with the beauties of their Eden home. They were delighted with the little songsters around them, wearing their bright yet graceful plumage, and warbling forth their happy, cheerful music. The happy pair united with them and raised their voices in harmonious songs of love, praise, and adoration to the Father and His dear

²² Khan, *Music of Life*, 13.

Son for the tokens of love which surrounded them. They recognized the order and harmony of creation, which spoke of wisdom and knowledge that were infinite.²³

The rhythm of the universe is inclusive of all species, as vibrations exist at the summit of our response to the Creator during the creativity of God in God's Creation Week (Genesis 1:1-31). The laws of rhythm were not only witnessed during Creation Week, but are replicated in the earth today, especially when we see the behavior of horses, marching bands, and the mounted horseman of the cavalry, gallop in strict riding formation; when men and women, boys and girls take to the dance floor; and when the crying baby finds the soothing of a mother's hand comforting as she pats the baby's back in patterns of rhythm.²⁴ The *material composition* of the *formless self*, to the *formed self* is a manifestation of the laws of rhythm. The formless self is composed of vibrations, motion, and movement that germinate in its evolution or evolving, before the forming self in the mother's womb. David said:

You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb . . . My frame was not hidden from You, when I was made in secret, and wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Your eyes saw my substance, being yet unformed . . . and in Your book they all were written, the days fashioned for me, when as yet there were none of them (Psalm 139:13-16, NKJV).

This is the *material composition* of the *formless self* and the *formed self*; the verification of one's structure and substance from God; the *recognition* of one's true identity designated by God; and the confirmation of one's identification, certified by God. The material composition in the musician has a mind and a mindset that is connected to his/her creator. One's individuation, identity, and identification are defined before one enters into one's mother's womb. The presence of one's Theos and theology has been shaped before one enters one's mother's womb.

²³ Ellen G. White, *Story of Redemption* (Washington, DC: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1974), 22, 23.

²⁴ Khan, *Music of Life*, 1-14.

One's mind and mindset are "capable of sensing sounds, of imaging these sounds in reproductive and creative imagination, of being aroused by them emotionally, of being capable of sustained thinking in terms of these experiences, and ordinarily, though not necessarily, of giving some form of expression of them in musical performances or in creative music."²⁵

And yet! The formed self and one's spiritual allegiance are accosted by the undiscerning mind that has not inquired of the true identity of his/her musicality. Thus, there emerges judgment and sometimes injustice. It is this sense of one's significance that contributes to and elucidates how one lives; and yet, it is the stuff of relationships. When one is judged or misjudged by others in favor of how they see the world or hear the world, that conflict is born and exacerbated.²⁶ That said, how might judging and misjudging individuals of certain musical identities look?

Theo-musicology and Religion

Authenticity in music identity is often obliterated by the oppression of religiosity.²⁷ The gift of immanence, individuation, and improvisation is frequently identified unjustly by the scourge of religiosity, often leaving those who reside and function in the 'God within universe', with displacement, judgment, and ethnocentrism. My argument is in the articulation of liberation, through the theological, multicultural, and religious education of inclusion. Theo-musicology is an appropriate framework or scaffolding for this focus of musical identity. Jon Spencer, in adumbration about theo-musicology posits that it "is a musicological method for

²⁵ Carl E. Seashore, *Psychology of Music* (New York, NY: Dover Publications, 1967), 1.

²⁶ Anselm L. Strauss, *Mirrors & Masks* (Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1959), 135.

²⁷ Jon Michael Spencer, *Theology of American Popular Music* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1989), 2.

theologizing about the *Sacred* (the religious/churched), the *Secular* (the theistic unreligious/unchurched, and the *Profane* (the atheistic/irreligious).” This musicology that incorporates principles, methods, and methodology from “anthropology, sociology, psychology, and philosophy” renders support to theological interpretation.²⁸ The inclusion or exclusion of the sacred, secular, and profane is usually seen as moral or immoral by the presence and tenets of religious dogma or the peril of religiosity. The lines of demarcation among the sacred, secular, and profane are not as indelible as one might think. In fact, the lines of demarcation among these three groups tend to overlap into what Spencer calls the intra-societal dynamics of the city. Demonstrating them as three figurative circles, he shows that they manifest as two extreme worlds, *sacred* and *profane*, in which “God is viewed as immortal, invisible, and incomprehensible.”²⁹ The sacred and the profane overlap the secular world that lies in the middle, where “god is viewed as mortal, visible, and comprehensible (as human genius). This judgement from others, many times supported by ourselves, results in how the sacred, the secular, and the profane reflect or mirror an identity that is anticipated and welcomed.”³⁰

Theo-musicology provides analysis of the *irreligious* and the *irreverent* of the profane, which is attributive to their incapacity “to live religion consciously.”³¹ It is here that the identity of the “God within” must be discerned, not so much from the outward appearance, or one’s rationale for participation with the sacred (the religious/churched), but rather taking the *pulse of compassion*, for one’s propensity to stray from the status quo.

²⁸ Spencer, *Theology of American Popular Music*, x-10.

²⁹ Ibid., 10.

³⁰ Strauss, *Mirrors & Masks*, 141.

³¹ Mircea Eliade, *Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion* (New York, NY: Harcourt Brace and World, 1959), 213.

Frank Rogers renders six dimensions inherent in his PULSE of compassion:

- P – *Paying attention*. Perceiving another’s experience with a nonjudgmental, nonreactive clarity
- U – *Understanding empathically*. Being moved by the sometimes hidden suffering within that person
- L – *Loving with connection*. Being filled with an extending an all embracing care
- S – *Sensing the sacredness*. Recognizing and savoring the cosmic expanse of compassion that holds and heals all wounds
- E – *Embodying new life*. Yearning for the restorative flourishing to be birthed within another³²

Rogers suggests there are times when our compassion “requires” cultivation. He further suggests that “the pulse of our lives needs to be tended and restored to the tender heartbeat of care.”³³ One way of doing this is to bring a compassionate and nonjudgmental observation to the behavior of this *godliness of heart and godliness of mind*. Ogden suggests that “Godlessness of mind (atheism) is actually the secularism of the unreligious who have not yet lost the capacity to live religion consciously, but have only lost the desire to do so.”³⁴ It is here that theomusicology must form philosophical meaning that intercalates religious significance into the negative “remembrances of religiosity,” in the *godliness of heart and godliness of mind’s* experience. On face value it would be too easy for one to judge both the godliness of heart and mind, based on the values of the *sacred* (the religious/churched) or the orthodoxy of the status quo. However, there are two salient points to consider: (1) Ogden’s view sees faith in God as unavoidable, while (2) Eliade’s view declares those who seem to be emancipated from the compelling forces of faith are never completely free of “behavior, theologies, and mythologies

³² Frank Rogers, Jr., *Practicing Compassion* (Nashville, TN: Fresh Air Books, 2015), 27.

³³ Ibid.

³⁴ Schubert M. Ogden, *Reality of God* (New York, NY: Harper & Row, 1966), 24.

that are their inescapable sacred history.”³⁵ The tension between theists and atheists would be that their distinctions in behavior are not always distinguishable or discernible, particularly as irreligious or irreverent. While the *sacred* (the religious/churched) may be identified or judged by the status quo as operating within the orthodoxy of its church, they too may at times vacillate between the *godlessness of heart* of the irreligious, and the *godlessness of the mind* of the irreverent.

Spencer cites Bruce Reed, sociologist, who characterizes this behavior as “*patterned oscillation*.” Bruce Reed’s characterization of theists’ behavior oscillates between *interdependence* and *extra dependence*. Interdependence and extra dependence gives impetus to *theo-musicology* as a tool or framework for additional analysis within the nature of the unreligious and the irreligious. Reed elaborates on this oscillation:

In the process of oscillation, interdependence, the disposition of self-autonomous individuals functioning independently in the City with their confirmation and sustentation in their own hands, periodically gives way to *extra dependence*: the anti-structural realm of the Church to which individuals return for a rejuvenating dose of dependence on and at attention from the primal Parent.³⁶

How does Martin Buber’s view of *oscillation* look in the behavior of the proposed inhabitants of the Sacred, the Secular, and the Profane?³⁷ How is this identification defined? Is it manifested in the material composition of these musicians?

Accordingly, Bruce Reed suggests there are three kinds of oscillation:

- *Personal oscillation*, which is the *patterned* ‘reversal’ and ‘expansion’ of those who attend church regularly

³⁵ Spencer, *Theology of American Popular Music*, 3.

³⁶ Bruce Reed, *Dynamics of Religion: Process and Movement in Christian Churches* (1978): 73, quoted in Spencer, *Theology of American Popular Music*, 8, 9.

³⁷ Martin Buber, *I and Thou*, trans. Ronald Gregor Smith (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1937), 95, 100, 116.

- *Representative oscillation*, the unpatterned reversal and expansion of those who are infrequent in church attendance but dependent on the personal oscillation of relatives or friends
- *Vicarious oscillation*, the non-patterned metacosmical meandering of those who neither attend nor have individual representation but are yet reliant on worship happening in their community³⁸

A fourth category that needs to be added to this is ‘*non-oscillation*’, a patterned stillness of those who remain interdependent and for whom the church and worship are personally unimportant and meaningless.

There is one notable pattern between representative oscillation and vicarious oscillation, and that is the dependent and reliant nature of those who infrequently attend church. They are all in need of periodic affirmation from church members, family members, and the worship community. Perhaps the foundation of this behavior may be embedded in Eliade’s expressed view (cited by Spencer), that “those who appear to be free of the ‘constraints of faith’ are never unbuckled from the straps of religious behavior, theologies, and mythologies” or [their primal parent] the Sacred (the religious/churched).

Spencer argues that while “one’s premise [is] either theological exegesis (following Ogden’s proposition) or religio-philosophical eisegesis (following Eliade’s proposition), these are viable analytical approaches for theo-musicology.”³⁹ Theo-musicology echoes both Augustine⁴⁰ and Markus,⁴¹ assertions that the lines of delineation between the Sacred and the Secular are not that far apart.

³⁸ Reed, *Dynamics of Religion* (1978): 73, quoted in Spencer, *Theology of American Popular Music*, 9.

³⁹ Spencer, *Theology of American Popular Music*, v.

⁴⁰ Augustine, *City of God*, trans. Gerald G. Walsh, et al. (New York: Images Books, 1958), ix-x.

⁴¹ R. A. Markus, *Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St Augustine* (1970), quoted in Spencer, *Theological Music: Introduction to Theomusicology* (New York: Greenwood Press, 1991), 20-28.

Joachim Wach, a sociologist of religion, continues Spencer, makes a distinction between “*semi-religious*” and “*pseudo-religious*” experiences. The dimension of ultimacy by the unreligious . . . can be termed “semi religious experiences . . . or idolatry, insofar as the object of devotion is finite rather than infinite.”⁴² The idolatrous experience does not diminish its authenticity, says Ogden. Traditionally, many would think that idolatry points to one’s move away from God, while replacing the Theos with something that is non-divine, and perverting the divine as non-divine. That the idolator reduces God to the non-divine thing as Theos is less significant than the fact that he sees the unique significance of God “as symbol or sacrament of God’s presence.”⁴³ Symbols and their aesthetical representations are the elements that drive our “learned and shared patterns of beliefs, behaviors, and values of people.”⁴⁴

All of this is to say and insist that both Augustine⁴⁵ and Markus⁴⁶ positing of the close proximity of the Sacred (religious/churched), the Secular (theistic/unchurched), and the Profane (atheistic/irreligious) not only share some bit of unmeasured space, but seem at various times to need and seek each other. Nicholas Lash suggests there is great significance in the “aesthetic descriptions of religious experience [that] tend to interpret the difference between the religious and the unreligious as respectively analogous to being musical and tone deaf, and that being deaf to religions is viewed as being deaf to God.”⁴⁷ The inquiry of these individuals must transcend

⁴² Joachim Wach, *Types of Religious Experience: Christian and NON-Christian* (1951): 33, 44-45, quoted in Spencer, *Theology of American Popular Music*, 4.

⁴³ Spencer, *Theology of American Popular Music*, 2-4.

⁴⁴ Bennett, “Intercultural Communication,” 3.

⁴⁵ Augustine, *City of God*, ix-x.

⁴⁶ Markus, “*Saeculum: History and Society in the Theology of St Augustine*, 20-28.

⁴⁷ Nicholas Lash, *Easter in Ordinary: Reflections and Human Experience and the Knowledge of God* (1986): 290, quoted in Spencer, *Theology of American Popular Music*, 5.

the guilty stereotyping that comes from the ‘religious rite’, who write the oracles of music religiosity. Theo-musicology is very much a key element found in the *material composition* and *identity* of church musicians and non-church musicians. I would submit that the cultural apparatus of certain church societies that insist on musical oppression and musical exclusion of those musical identities that do not fit the status quo investigate and find scientific ways and means of measuring their musical biases, remembering that the ‘*formless self*’ and the ‘*formed self*’ have their origins in spiritual, psychological, physiological, cultural, theological, environmental, and cultural embryogeny.⁴⁸ It would be vital to remember that the formless self and the formed self are not static, but there is a biological and an evolutionary connection that moves us from the indeterminate to the determinate. As an ever evolving species, we enroll in environments of the Universe as our biocultural evolution continues its curriculum of special progress.⁴⁹

Musical Identity and Biocultural Evolution

Musical identity is a response to one’s biocultural evolution and development. It is a part of the *material composition* or the substantive formulation and development of the ones being identified.⁵⁰ Music is not only bio-cultural, it is universal, says Ian Cross, *Music and Biocultural Evolution*. Alan Merriam affirms [that] music “is a universal behavior,”⁵¹ as Blacking states more circumspectly that “every known human society has what trained

⁴⁸ Roberts, “Improvisation, Individuation, and Immanence,” 51.

⁴⁹ Ian Cross, *Music and Biocultural Evolution* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2003), 19.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 19.

⁵¹ Alan Merriam, *Anthropology of Music*, (1964): 227, quoted in Cross, *Music and Biocultural Evolution*, 19.

musicologists would recognize as music.”⁵² This musical identity has as its formation, the presence and relationship of *human biology, mind, and behavior*. Ian Cross puts it this way:

From a materialist perspective, underlying human behaviors are minds, and underlying minds are embodied human brains. Underlying embodied human brains are human biologies, and underlying human biologies are the process of evolution. Musics as culturally situated minded human behaviors—musics as material phenomena— thus stand in some to be determined relationship to human evolution....Current theories of evolution are concerned with the ways in which the operation of processes of random variation, natural selection, and differential reproduction within a population leads to changes in the state and make up of that population.⁵³

Another way of saying this may be that ‘birds of a feather flock together’ illuminating the fact that an evolutionary approach may give focus to those attributes of gene decorum, and those organisms of group or individual behaviors may well coalesce, in some adaptive process that yields “the differential success in survival and reproduction of the entities that make up the population.”⁵⁴ There is without a doubt, the belief, that evolutionary thinking makes available a frame work for delving into the connections between human biology, behavior, and culture. We have already stated that culture (according to Milton Bennett) is “learned and shared patterns of values, beliefs, and behaviors, by an individual or group.”⁵⁵

Michael V. Angrosino posits:

Culture as a whole is a set of beliefs, behaviors, and material products that help a people adapt to its natural and social environment. As a part of the system of culture, religion must also be thought of as an element in the process of human adaptation, and hence in

⁵² John Blacking, *How Musical is Man?* (1973): 224, quoted in Cross, *Music and Biocultural Evolution*, 19.

⁵³ Cross, *Music and Biocultural Evolution*, 19.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁵⁵ Milton Bennett, “Intercultural Communication: A Current Perspective” in *Basic Concepts of Intercultural Communication: Selected Readings*, ed. Milton Bennett (Boston, MA: Intercultural Press, 1998), 3.

the evolution of human culture. As environments constantly change, the means by which human groups adapt must also change.⁵⁶

Assimilation continues to actualize perceptions of personalities, perceptions of character traits, or the gradual transformational changes because of physical attraction or sensory experiences that emerge because of social, physical, mental, romantic or religious compatibility. We should accept that culture is never static. Culture is always changing, whether it is good or bad, historical or philosophical, musical or poetical, theoretical or practical, religious or theological. Culture strata can appear in two ways: *objective* or *subjective*.⁵⁷

Objective culture is what people do when they turn to an evening of art, literature, drama, classical music, or dance. In other words, they plan to participate in one of the institutions of culture—behavior that has become routinized into a particular form.⁵⁸ Milton Bennett refers to this as “Culture writ large,” with a ‘C’, which could include also social, economic, political, and linguistic systems—the kinds of things that usually are included in area studies or history courses.”⁵⁹ Conversely, subjective culture – “‘*culture writ small*’... refers to the psychological features that define a group of people—their everyday thinking and behavior rather than to the institutions they have created.” Milton Bennett further posits that “subjective culture is the learned and shared patterns of beliefs, behaviors, and values of groups of interacting people.”⁶⁰

⁵⁶ Michael V. Agrosino, *Culture of the Sacred: Exploring the Anthropology of Religion* (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press, Inc., 2001), 202.

⁵⁷ Bennett, “Intercultural Communication” 3.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

⁵⁹ Ibid.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

Culture or musical culture will almost always resonate with their historical import, innate values, conventions, or institutions. This is how society recognizes music, musicality, musical intelligence, or music of the soul.⁶¹

Musical identity is the endowment of the formless and the formed self, that is, contoured before it enters the mother's womb. How it evolves is a biocultural evolution that manifest after the formless self has found residence in the mother's womb. The question emerges in the context of how they will be received. Will they be included because of their uniqueness, or will they be excluded because of their uniqueness? The scientific measurement of exclusive and inclusive cultures will be addressed in the next chapter.

⁶¹ Cross, *Music and Biocultural Evolution*, 20.

Chapter 2

FROM ETHNOCENTRISM TO ETHNORELATIVISM

How we see ourselves in relationship to and acceptance of differences may in fact not be who we really think we are at the core. Our angle of diverse perceptions about race, culture, sub-culture, inter-culture, and subjective and objective culture may be quite centralized to our own world view of nations, ethnicities, races, cultures, arts, theology, or religions.

The fluency of our individual or collective cultures and conflicts have to be examined within the context of non-judgmental observations before we can ameliorate any semblance of objectivity in change or growth. In *Dynamics of Religious Conversion: Identity and Transformation*, Bailey Gillespie quotes Anselm Strauss, *Mirrors & Masks: The Search for Identity*, who suggests that personal identity is often derived from “judgments of others, and particular brand of masks or identity is fashioned by an anticipation of these judgments.”⁶² Authentic identity is at stake always, when we tend towards subjecting or subjugating others through our person or ideological associational, transcendental, or substantial prisms.⁶³

When I speak of identity, I inhere within those organizations and associations that institutionalize and fashion their own brand of persons, places, or things; or those who institute one size, thought, apparel, ideology, theology, sound, or identity “fits all” based on their sectarian, racial, philosophical, or cultural biases. The odyssey of musicians, whose lives are constantly peppered with their view of the world many times manifest a narrow view that is ethnocentric.

⁶² Gillespie, *Dynamics of Religious Conversion*, 141.

⁶³ Ibid., 136.

Milton Bennett, author of *Basic concepts of Intercultural Communication* posits that *Ethnocentric* is defined as using one's own set of standards and customs to judge all people, often unconsciously.⁶⁴ Conversely, the individuals who anticipate the universe, and think inclusively about the world, in broad strokes, are seen as ethnorelative. Milton Bennett further renders:

Ethnorelative means the opposite; it refers to being comfortable with many standards and customs and to having an ability to adapt behavior and judgments to a variety of interpersonal settings.⁶⁵

Stages of Disjuncture

Philip V. Bohlman, author of "Music and Culture Historiographies of Disjuncture,"⁶⁶ has posed three stages of disjuncture as a historical modeling for the music and cultural disconnect: colonial encounter, racism, and nationalism.

Colonial Encounter

Those of us who have experienced racism or discrimination of the dominant culture are aware that there is great disjuncture and debate between music and culture.⁶⁷ We who worship at the temple of music performance and music education know that at some time during our musical development, we were discouraged by our musical masters not to concern ourselves with

⁶⁴ Bennett, "Intercultural Communication," 26.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 26.

⁶⁶ Philip Bohlman, "Music and Culture Historiographies of Disjuncture" in *Cultural Study of Music: A Critical Introduction*, ed. Martin Clayton, Trevor Herbert, and Richard Middleton (New York, NY: Routledge, 2003), 45-54.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

culture – “that it doesn’t need to be about culture.”⁶⁸ What is important is the historical disconnect, or the disjuncture of our historical past. And yet it is imperative to recognize the intrinsic nature of the musical baggage we all bring to the table – namely musical cultural fluency and musical conflict fluency.⁶⁹ This conflict begins at the moment of encounter. It is the intensity of encounter that produces awareness of difference. Awareness of differences often engenders awe and wonder or fear and danger. This is the fright of *colonial encounter*. Missionaries and colonialists encountering musical differences developed phobias and fears about these differences. “Calvinist Jean de Le’ry, whose descriptions of Tupinamba song, dance, and ritual . . . were reproduced by European writers such as Montaigne in his celebrated essay, ‘Des Cannibales’”⁷⁰ who while writing about the horrific accounts of cannibalism, conversely was attracted to European repertoires, which in essence produced a type of awareness. Bohlman, citing Aracena, reports that Jesuit missionaries (who were charged with converting the regional natives) used music as a weapon, “transcribing and re-composing music from the cultures they encountered into a new global language that would allow them to “sing salvation.”⁷¹ This type of manipulation resulted in the kind of ethnocentrism that contributed to racism.

⁶⁸ Bohlman, “Music and Culture Historiographies of Disjuncture,” 45.

⁶⁹ Michelle LeBaron and Venashri Pillay. *Conflict Across Cultures: A Unique Experience of Bridging Differences* (Boston, MA: Intercultural Press, 2006), 15, 16.

⁷⁰ Jean de Le’ry, *Histoire d’un voyage faict en la terre du Bre’sil* (La Rochelle, France: Antoine Chuppin, (1578), quoted in Bohlman, “Music and Culture Historiographies of Disjuncture,” 47.

⁷¹ Beth K. Aracena, *Singing Salvation: Jesuit Musics in Colonial Chile, 1600-1767*, (Ph.D. thesis, Chicago, IL: Univ. of Chicago, 1999), quoted in Bohlman, “Music and Culture Historiographies of Disjuncture,” 47.

Racism

Music was used as a weapon to create a language and a vocabulary of racism in German musical scholarship, says Bohlman.⁷² The interconnection of scholarship and racism was but a likely marriage between two attracted languages. “Pamela Potter’s study of Nazi musicology has uncovered the step-by-step acquiescence of German musicologists to the steady radicalization of German thought in both the public and scientific spheres.”⁷³ Musicology in the academy of musicologists manifested and identified the evidence of racial language in the scientific arena. The scientific academy was used by Nazi scholars as a way to build a consensus, that biology could help fuel the inequities between those of the Holocaust and their German counterparts.⁷⁴ Ethnocentrism always creates a centrality of superiority of one’s self individually or in the case of German superiority, collectively. Bohlman puts it this way:

Nature in two forms, human biology and the human transformation of natural landscapes, could explain not only cultural difference but also cultural dominance.⁷⁵

Human biology was also manifested in the use of measuring skull shapes that resulted in the increase of global racism. Racial stereotyping is very evident in Stephen Blum’s distinction of racist versus racial assessment. This is evidenced in assessing the discourse between European music and African music. So blatant was this scourge of racial and racist presence, that

⁷² Bohlman, “Music and Culture Historiographies of Disjuncture,” 48.

⁷³ Pamela Potter, *Most German of the Arts: Musicology and Society from the Weimar Republic to the End of Hitler’s Reich* (1998): 48, quoted in Bohlman, “Music and Culture Historiographies of Disjuncture,” 48.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Bohlman, “Music and Culture Historiographies of Disjuncture,” 49.

ethnomusicologist Stephen Blum, says Bohlman, sought not to rely on the racist/racial stereotyping.⁷⁶

Nationalism

National identity forges the bond of relationships within the community of music and culture. National identity also increases disjuncture when there is conflict between music and or culture. When a nation evolves from the interaction of music and culture, the landscape broadens across cultural borders in such a way that national stimulation is heightened and music coerces the human spirit in triumphs and celebration in a global response that affirms its artistic nationalism. Bohlman believes in the ability of music “to articulate nationalism by representing place,” by amalgamating regional dialects, and performing folk songs. Problems arise when individuals or groups within certain geographic, political, religious, or sectarian boundaries take self-serving and ethnocentric attitudes to isolate differences, or to marginalize people, as did Germany, when in her ‘expansionism’, she created ‘speech islands’ (*Sprachinseln*), linguistically bounded regions, especially in eastern and southeastern Europe, where German was spoken by a minority population.⁷⁷ America in the nineteenth century would have its problems, as she tried desperately to eke out a national music that mirrored the musics of a new citizenry. Kilby, author of “Creativity and Culture in American Nationalism and Ideology,” notes William Gibbons’ idea that the Yankee Doodle movement was not about music as an entity solely about itself, but was more about “the historical and cultural relevance it carried with it from well before

⁷⁶ Bohlman, “Music and Culture Historiographies of Disjuncture,” 49.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 50, 51.

the Revolution.”⁷⁸ The transcendental movement, while fledgling in its endeavors to craft a music that was indigenous to Americana, struggled with its European ethnocentrism, much to its dismay.⁷⁹ To this end, a new American nationalism found liberation, as it germinated through the “kicking and screaming” out of the soil that is from the boundless landscape and geography of a nation known as America; and yet with America’s fledgling music liberation, America’s ethnocentrism was obfuscated because at that time there was no instrument or methodology available to measure the presence or the lack of inter-culture.

Twenty-first century research has yielded a process for movement from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism. Does any of this effect musical identity? If so, how? How does one know if they are in need of some type of cultural adaptation? Or is one to observe incremental movement in the adaptive process? Is there a cultural “cause and effect? Perhaps it is necessary to find definition within the discipline of *culture* and its multi-infusion of seismic effect on behavior of human beings.

Culture Defined

Danesi and Perron reported that Kroeber and Kluckhohn explored 150 different definitions, only to ascertain two very vital points regarding culture: (1) “that culture is a way of life based on some system of shared meanings; and (2) that it is passed on from generation to generation through this very system.”⁸⁰ Danesi and Perron suggest that the thesis of cultures is

⁷⁸ Shelton E. Kilby, “Creativity and Culture in American Nationalism and Ideology: An Influence in the Music of Charles Ives and Scott Joplin,” Master’s thesis (Cincinnati, OH: Union Institute & University, 2011), 31.

⁷⁹ Ibid.

⁸⁰ Kroeber and Kluckhohn, *Culture: A Critical Review*, 387, quoted in Marcel Danesi and Paul Perron, *Analyzing Cultures: An Introduction & Handbook* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999), 22.

positioned in systemic *signifying orders* with compositions of *signs* (words, gestures, visual symbols, etc.), *codes* (language, art, etc.), and *texts* (conversations, compositions, etc.) that various groups use in their lifestyles. The illumination of culture may be defined as “a way of life based on a signifying order developed originally in a tribal context that is passed along through the signifying order from one generation to the next.”⁸¹

From Ethnocentrism to Ethnorelativism

Milton Bennett makes the following observation:

Imagine . . . a group of our primate ancestors gathered around their fire, gnawing on the day's catch. Another group of primates comes into view, heading toward the fire. I wonder how often the first group looked up and said (in effect), ‘Ah, cultural diversity, how wonderful.’ More likely it was fight or flight, and things have not changed that much since then.⁸²

Humans (generally) do not like change, and in some cases do not like difference. If we can avoid the change we sidestep the problem or fight it. If we cannot avoid the change, we will mount an offensive against the difference. Bennett suggests that assimilation is related to the steps of resocialization by [replacing] “one’s original worldview with that of the “host culture.”⁸³ Adaptation is “additive”⁸⁴ and not a replacement. Adaptation does not fluctuate in presence and

⁸¹ Marcel Danesi and Paul Perron, *Analyzing Cultures: An Introduction & Handbook* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999), 22, 23.

⁸² Bennett, “Intercultural Communication,” 24.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, 25.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*

absences. While it is complex, it appears that adaptation progresses through developmental stages.⁸⁵

Peter S. Adler (cited by Milton Bennett) posits culture shock as having five stages: “the euphoria of contact, when cultural difference is first encountered; the confusion of disintegration, when loss of self-esteem intrudes; the anger of reintegration, when the new culture is rejected and the old self reasserted; the relaxed self-assuredness of autonomy, when cross-cultural situations can be handled with relative ease; and the creativity of independence, when choice and responsibility accompany a deep respect for one’s own and other’s cultures.”⁸⁶ Put in a broader context, Bennett, a definer of culture shock, sees culture shock generally as a response by humans toward gradual development, loss, or change.⁸⁷

The broader assessment of cultural adaptation is generally discussed in developmental nomenclature that results in more descriptive experience. This is evidenced in the Intercultural Sensitivity model developed by Janet Bennett and Michael Paige, which can be divided into ethnocentric stages and ethnorelative stages.⁸⁸ According to Milton Bennett, ethnocentric behavior resides in the minds of those who assume that one’s personal worldview is superior to the real world; and yet they do not discern any differences between people of diverse differences.⁸⁹

⁸⁵ Bennett, “Intercultural Communication,” 24, 25.

⁸⁶ Peter S. Adler, “Transitional Experience: An Alternative View of Culture Shock,” *Journal of Humanistic Psychology* 15, no. 4 (1975): 13, quoted in Bennett, “Intercultural Communication,” 25.

⁸⁷ Bennett, “Intercultural Communication,” 25.

⁸⁸ Janet Bennett and Michael Paige, *Training Design for Intercultural Learning* (Portland, OR: Summer Institute for Intercultural Communication, 2005), 43-49.

⁸⁹ Bennett, “Intercultural Communication,” 24, 25.

Ethnocentric Stages

The person who experiences worldview realities through the lens of isolationism, as cultural myopia, may be exhibiting unawares diversity in the stages of denial, defense, and minimization.

Denial

Denial at its fundamental level of cultural bigotry dismisses the reality of cogent differences between people from different cultures. There are often circumstances where people in “physical or social isolation from people who are culturally different can reinforce selective perception; whereby a person sees what he/she wants to see and does not see what he/she is unaccustomed to perceiving.”⁹⁰ An example would be the individual who is unknowingly in ‘denial’ of a worldview, who may engage in familiar social functions and assumptions which may inform him or her into believing that their relationships with “host nationals is excellent, when in fact the host nationals might be broadcasting dissatisfaction,” which are not readily acknowledged by the person in denial.⁹¹ Bennett suggests that people in denial may in fact manifest not only disinterest, but “may need to engage in conscious separation: the intentional erection of physical or social barriers to create distance from cultural difference”⁹² This immediately introduces *defense*, the second stage of ethnocentrism.

⁹⁰ Mitchell R. Hammer and Milton J. Bennett, *Intercultural Development Inventory* (Portland, OR: Intercultural Communication Institute, 2001), 15.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Bennett, “Intercultural Communication,” 35.

Defense

Defense in ethnocentric behavior engenders increased acknowledgement of differences by increasing more ways of creating defenses of perpetration “against them,” say Hammer and Bennett. This kind of behavior threatens the self-esteem and identity of those who experience exclusion.⁹³ They further posit that experiencing “cultural difference is polarized around either the inferiority of other cultures or the superiority of one’s own culture, thus betraying the underlying polarization of experience.”⁹⁴ This is a prerequisite for the next stage of ethnocentrism.

Minimization

Minimization forms are composed of (1) *human similarity* (or ‘physical universalism’), which views all cultures as merely elaboration of fundamental biology,⁹⁵ and (2) *universal values* (or ‘transcendent universalism’), which suggests all human beings are or should be subject to a single, transcendent, and universal imperative or entity. Hammer and Bennett’s conclusion on minimization, found in hostile ethnocentric behavior (a bi-product of the defense stage), sees the remaining through ethnocentric stages in an ascending scale of cultural disenfranchisement, suggesting a need for transitioning to a positive stage of inclusion.⁹⁶

⁹³ Bennett, “Intercultural Communication,” 36.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 42.

⁹⁶ Ibid.

Ethnorelativism

The description of ethnocentrism in its descending scale of excluding others needs a new lens of perception, in moving from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism. The reason being, one's infatuation with one's self knowledge seems in many ways to manifest the presence of egotism, where one inheres in one's prominence and declaration of what others think of them. According to Carl G. Jung in *The Undiscovered Self*, "self-knowledge" is a knowledge that is limited, of which "most of it [is] dependent on social factors of what goes on in the human psyche; which is why there is this 'prejudice' ... that such and such a thing does not happen 'with us' or 'in our family' or among our friends and acquaintances."⁹⁷ The alternative for ethnocentrism is ethnorelativism. Hammer and Bennet posit the stages of ethnorelativism as acceptance, adaptation, and integration.⁹⁸

Acceptance

Acceptance signals recognition or identity of franchising cultural difference in the worldview of diversity. Acceptance affirms differences in languages, non-verbal behavior, and style of thinking and communicating. Hammer and Bennett emphasize and underscore recognition of alternative values engenders acceptance and the goodness is enjoined to different manners in the world of diversity. They further elucidate that acceptance does not stipulate agreement, and yet one can embrace it as an alternative value without denigrating it to the curse

⁹⁷ C. G. Jung, *Undiscovered Self* (New York, NY: New American Library/Penguin Books, 2006), 6.

⁹⁸ Hammer and Bennett, *Intercultural Development Inventory*, 16.

of unsuitability, making it harmful.⁹⁹ Acceptance in the ethnorelative stages positions the second level as adaptation.

Adaptation

Adaptation, which causes or engages a type of *cognitive frame shifting*, creates space for “empathy that allows one to create an experience more like that of people from...different cultures,” Hammer and Bennett posit. “Adaptation can also involve *behavioral code shifting*, which refers to the enactment of alternative experiences.”¹⁰⁰ As frame shifting evidences a limited shift that allows one to experience certain mores of various regional cultures that may be different from what he/she has experienced in their own culture, code shifting provides space for a response and a new reference from another world view.¹⁰¹ The presence of one or more alternative cultural frames of reference incentivizes the oncoming of biculturalism, or what Paul R. Smokowsski and Martica Bacallao refer to as “from melting pot to simmering stew.”¹⁰² This blending provides for the final stage in ethnorelativism – integration.

Integration

Integration incentivizes one to combine various entities of people’s cultural identity into a new cultural mosaic. When there is sufficient pluralism in the worldview and individual needs, one no longer needs to produce or pronounce identity within the confinement of one frame; life

⁹⁹ Hammer and Bennett, *Intercultural Development Inventory*, 16.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid.

¹⁰² Paul R. Smokowsski and Martica Bacallao, *Becoming Bicultural: Risk, Resilience, and Latino Youth* (New York, NY: New York University Press, 2011), 1.

is good because of integration. Within the world of the sacred, secular, and profane, there is groaning for diversity within the church that begs for corporate worship and worshippers to open up the “House of God” and make room for everybody to participate.¹⁰³

For some, fear of losing one’s culture in the potpourri of inter-culture need not be a worry, as the world of inter-culture is spheral. The world of spheral culture provides for a culture that has many, many facets.

Spheral Culture

Danesi and Perron explain that the institution of *signifying orders* has many structures and can be spatial and this we call spheres. These cultural spheres manifest as two distinct groups that are identified as *primary spheres* and *secondary spheres*. The primary group functions as kinship and religious, and is characterized by a face to face communication, as they interact in a milieu of togetherness as a group. Conversely, the secondary group takes on more of collectivism, where their character is more “impersonal” and “conventionalized.”¹⁰⁴ I argue that musical identity is very closely aligned with spheral culture. On the one hand kinship gives a type of balance and permanence in the activities of this particular group. Those of the kinship are celebrated for their *primary identity* “and a vital sense of belonging.”¹⁰⁵ Musicians who participate in certain genres of music as their particular specialty tend to bond and affirm each other, whether they know each other or not. Their vibrations in the realm of sound tend to attract the gravity of the other and a bond is born. In a way (for that moment) they are of one mind.

¹⁰³ Hammer and Bennett, *Intercultural Development Inventory*, 16.

¹⁰⁴ Danesi and Perron, *Analyzing Cultures*, 29, 30.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 19.

Like-minded people, particularly those who are bonded by a certain sound, or a certain vibration could be said to hang by the same tree trunk. It is what Carl Seashore's *Psychology of Music* refers to as "a hierarchy of talents, branching out along certain trunk lines into the rich arborization, foliage, and fruitage of the tree, which we call the "musical mind."¹⁰⁶ The musical mind is endowed with the ability to hear, feel, and perhaps be able to respond by expressing what it has heard or felt. The musical mind is of spherical culture, in that its primary kinship is characterized by those modes of communication that manifest as levels of interaction between parties of likeness, which promises a solid kinship or solidarity.¹⁰⁷ There are laws of the universe that encapsulate sound, have solidarity, and harmonize. Hazrat Inayat Khan, *Music of Life: Inner Nature and Effects of Sound* posits:

The law of music that is working throughout the universe, and that in other words may be called the law of life: the sense of proportion, the law of harmony, the law that brings about balance, the law that is hidden behind all aspects of life, which holds this universe intact and works out the destiny of the whole universe, fulfilling its purpose.¹⁰⁸

Music of the universe is what draws us to nature and sometimes our own nature. What draws us are those vibrations of sound that appeal to our whole being. It touches our mind, our body, our nature that we inhabit. Our body rhythms, our bodily tone and perhaps our body intonation serve as receptors for what we hear and feel in the universe. Sensory capacities that correspond to our psychological attributes of sound are *pitch*, *loudness*, *time*, and *timbre* "depend [on] the physical characteristics of the sound wave: *frequency*, *amplitude*, *duration*, and *form* ... It is through these sensory capacities that we conceive every sound in nature, whether it is vocal,

¹⁰⁶ Carl E. Seashore, *Psychology of Music* (New York, NY: Dover Publications, Inc., 1967), 2-6.

¹⁰⁷ Danesi and Perron, *Analyzing Cultures*, 29.

¹⁰⁸ Hazrat Inayat Khan, *Music of Life: The Inner Nature and Effect of Sound* (New Lebanon, NY: Omega Publications, 2005), 70.

instrumental, musical or nonmusical.”¹⁰⁹ Sound and light are a kinship in spherul culture that are not only attracted to each other, but also seek interaction with each other. Sound and light together may manifest operationally through what Carl Seashore refers to as, one’s mind’s ear and mind’s eye.¹¹⁰ When one experiences music or musical tone within one’s sensory capacities, the presence of images or imagination is a guaranteed consequence. As a pianist, composer, arranger, I hear music in my head, and when I hear it, there will almost always follow a tonal image that will yield a visual image. In other words I do not go to the piano to create a sound or even a song. I simply go to the piano to affirm that what I heard is and will continue to be an ever-present reality.

Carl E. Seashore posits:

He creates music by “hearing it out,” not by picking it out on the piano or by mere seeing of the score or by abstract theories, but by hearing it out in his creative imagination through his “mind’s ear,” that is, his memory and imagination are rich and strong in power of concrete, faithful, and vivid tonal imagery; this imagery is so fully at his command that he can build the most complex musical structures and hear and feel all the effects of every detailed element before he has written down a note or sounded it out by voice or instrument.¹¹¹

The sensory capacities mentioned above are indicative of “a musical mind at the representation level—the capacity of living in a representative tonal world.”¹¹² Color is born through the tonal material of one’s sensory capacities. Thus the musical sounds are enriched through the musician’s musical mind. The music produced is not isolated from the universe, but is in fact a part of it. Augustine, peering into the prism of creation sees creation as the good

¹⁰⁹ Seashore, *Psychology of Music*, 2.

¹¹⁰ Ibid., 5.

¹¹¹ Ibid.

¹¹² Ibid., 6.

work of the Creator. He saw God's creation as "good in all its parts; it is—it exists, literally "stands out from nothingness"—because it possesses music, understood as form, unity, harmony, equality, and measured relation."¹¹³ Music in and of itself finds its origins in movements that are organized, but perhaps contoured by a "continuum of time."¹¹⁴

Music is a boundless phenomenon that found its origin somewhere in the cosmos during God's creation week. The biblical narrative designates a "call and response" when God answers Job's questioning by asking: *where were you when I laid the foundations of the earth? . . . When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?* (Job 38:4, 7) And yet! Societies from all over the world have different thoughts, conventions, religious beliefs, and theories about what music legally is.

Another manifestation of spherical culture in music, according to Danesi and Perron, is manifested within the philosophies of "such philosophers as Pythagoras, Aristotle, Plato, and Boethius," who believed that music had its origin with Apollo.¹¹⁵ These signifying orders of spherical culture espoused some of the laws of the universe. These primary groups of the spherical culture of kinship had the power of music to shape some of the thoughts and actions of humans. Greek music possessed an affinity for poetry. The music of the Greeks was closely aligned with language and rhythm in such a way that certain melodic contours of musical modes inhered with linguistic patterns of poetic expressions. Spherical musical culture is also manifested in the primary kinship of Muslim's melodic prayer, and yet they do not define these model expressions as music, though the West would certainly define their spherical expressions as music. There are

¹¹³ Carol Harrison, "Augustine and the Art of Music," in Jeremy S. Begbie and Steven R. Guthrie, *Resonant Witness: Conversations Between Music and Theology*, ed. Jeremy S. Begbie and Steven R. Guthrie (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2011), 27-45.

¹¹⁴ Danesi and Perron. *Analyzing Cultures*, 215-217.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 216

some African communities that see music “as the faculty that sets humans apart from other species; among some Native Americans it is thought to have originated as a way for spirits to communicate with human beings.”¹¹⁶ In the West, composers of music are usually recognized as legal, based on their ability to notate certain musical symbols on paper, that are to be interpreted according to conventional rules of musical organization. I would agree with Danesi and Perron that the smallest “unit or signifier of musical organization is the tone—a sound with specific pitch and duration.”¹¹⁷ Whether or not the spheral musical culture is primary or secondary, the signifier of a particular tone executes that tone in such a way that bespeaks an identity of a possible signifying order. That tone may produce a certain recognition that attracts a certain mindset of others within a particular signifying order. For instance, if a person who plays Appalachian folk music strikes a certain tone that is recognizable to a person from Appalachia, more than likely these individuals may not only become musically attracted to each other because of the tone, but may in fact begin to interact with each other on some plane of togetherness. This may hypothetically manifest in dialogue about Appalachian folk music, or develop into some kind of musical performance. Many times jazz musicians (who are usually impartial to any musical vocabulary) will hear a riff, a chordal harmony, a rhythm, or a non-chordal sound that attracts the ear of another musician in the room, causing stimulated dialogue between the two, because of its language, thus producing some kind of interaction between the two. I can remember being in a music store, trying out various keyboards. As I began to improvise, a gentleman who I had never seen before came over and immediately introduced himself, to let me know that he had heard what I played and that he identified what I was saying

¹¹⁶ Danesi and Perron, *Analyzing Cultures*, 216.

¹¹⁷ Ibid.

tonally. Danesi and Perron suggest that [improvisation] “usually takes place on the basis of some previously determined structure, such as a tone or a group of chords; or it occurs within a set of traditional rules, as in the ragas of India or the madams of the Middle East.”¹¹⁸ Spherical musical culture is not a local language, but a world and a musical language. It is a language that comports itself within the syntax of “melody, rhythm and harmony, and like gesture codes, [they] seem to be more understandable across cultures than verbal languages are, and fit much more easily into frames of meaning that transcend specific cultures.”¹¹⁹

Spherical culture can be recognized in the coalescing of music in nature. When we respond to nature’s music, where strains of sound move through the branches of trees, or the whistling of the wind is contoured through the rocks and boulders of mountains, and the clapping of lightening creates a musical cue for the rumbling of thunder, there is a manifestation of nature’s symphony. Hazrat Inayat Khan posits:

The insects have their concerts and ballets, and the choirs of birds chant in unison their hymns of praise. Dogs and cats have their orgies, foxes and wolves have their *soiree’s musicales* in the forest, while tigers and lions hold their operas in the wilderness. Music is the only means of understanding among birds and beasts. This may be seen by the gradation of pitch and the volume of tone, the manner of tune, the number of repetitions, and the duration of their various sounds; these convey to their fellow creatures the time for joining the flock the warning of coming danger, the declaration of war, the feeling of love, and the sense of sympathy, displeasure, passion, anger, fear, and jealousy, making a language of itself.¹²⁰

In the beginning, mankind, though shaped by God Himself, from dust of the earth, was without his tone, a constant tone, accompanied by the pulsations of his heart was not complete until God “breathed into [him] the breath of life, and mankind became a living soul (Genesis

¹¹⁸ Danesi and Perron, *Analyzing Cultures*, 216.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 217.

¹²⁰ Khan, *Music of Life*, 49, 50.

2:7).” Like the nature of God’s perfect creation, man learned to raise his tone, and drop his tone, by imitating nature’s tone and pitch as highs and lows. Out of the breath of his tone and his intonation mankind learned to convey his expressions of feelings through the counterpoint of his inner rhythm and the intonation of his tone. The height and the depth of his pitch allowed him to express his “sincerity, insincerity, inclination, disinclination, pleasure, or displeasure by the variety of his musical expressions.”¹²¹ The incorporation of his breath, tone, pulse, and heart beat created his rhythm; and finally, learning to use his tongue from the hollow in the roof of his mouth completed man’s ability to function in his polyphony. In doing so man learned to express in his tone a certain utterance that could produce a sound of “subservience, show a kindness, a sound of willingness, an unwillingness, coldness, and warmth.”¹²² The evolution of mankind into his signifying order inheres the consequence of his connection within the spherical culture of the primary and the secondary kinship. He even becomes susceptible to the “difference between the *material* and the *spiritual* point of view [in] that the material point of view sees matter as the first thing, and considers that intelligence and beauty and everything else evolved from it.”¹²³ However! One who becomes susceptible to the spiritual point of view understands that all beauty and wisdom comes first from our Creator and everything else in its beauty follows. The import of this can be seen in the spiritual person, whose music is spiritual. It sheds light on the fact that he tunes himself to the external and derives a certain satisfaction, knowing that the music he heard came *through* him rather than *to* him. The materialist is just the opposite. For

¹²¹ Khan, *Music of Life*, 50.

¹²² Ibid., 51, 52.

¹²³ Ibid., 50.

the materialist, the view of material comes first.¹²⁴ The music comes *to* him rather than *through* him, and as a result, he goes to his instrument where he tries to make up something on his instrument, or rather to manipulate his instrument into attempting to create an original sound, which is not at all original. Thus he creates something that is trendy or in vogue. Mankind is connected to the universe, and because they are a part of God's Creation, they will always find their connection and connectivity through the spherical culture.

Conclusion

Musical identity is a *material compositional design* made by God. It is a process that has its origins in the "*knowing*" and the "*forming*" of an individual, by the Creator himself: *Before I formed you in the womb I knew you: Before you were born I sanctified you, I ordained you.* (Jeremiah 1:5)." The material composition of mankind is fundamentally materialized in the "conditions of [God's] origins."¹²⁵ This is true both before entering the womb and after entering the womb. The dust of the earth in its composition bespeaks of how God shaped mankind from his entrance into the matter of God's green earth, and the matter of God's Spirit. Mankind being formed out of the dust of the earth is the Divine consequence and continuance of the formless self before the womb, and the finality of his formation, as he/she became a reality, and happened when "God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and mankind became a living soul (Genesis 2:7)." The citizenship of mankind's perfection, before the fall (in the Garden of Eden) placed him/her in the symphony of harmonic reality that resulted in musical polyphony between the birds of the air and the atmosphere of Divine Presence. [This] 'holy pair united with'...[the]

¹²⁴ Khan, *Music of Life*, 75.

¹²⁵ John Dewey, "Art as Experience," in *Art and Its Significance*, ed. Stephen David Ross (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 1994), 204.

“birds of every variety of color and plumage flitted among the trees and flowers” . . . ”and raised their voices in harmonious songs of love, praise, and adoration to the Father and His dear Son for the tokens of love which surrounded them. They recognized the order and harmony of creation, which spoke of wisdom and knowledge that were infinite.”¹²⁶ All of this before the fall! After the fall, mankind, now no longer able to experience face to face and voice to voice communication, must learn to communicate through the veil of Spiritual interpretation (Romans 8:1, 4, 16). As “the Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit . . . that we are not only the children of God . . . who do not know what to pray for, as we ought, but the Spirit himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered (Roman 8:26).”

Mankind, who realizes the consequences of his fall, in yearning for face to face, voice to voice communication, seeks to discover God from generation to generation. In doing so, he yearns to be alive in God’s City. His once perfected formed self, now finds what Augustine calls *The City of God*.¹²⁷

The City of God is contextual to the enjoining of theology and music. It is here that musical identity continues in its germination to manifest music and musicology of Theos, a musicology driven by theology. “Theo-musicology is more concerned with the eighteenth century notion of ‘divine origins’ (the cosmogony of music) than the nineteenth century hypothesis that the ‘organism’ of music literally ‘evolved’ from nothing into that which is ‘mastered by learned skills.’” Theo-musicology in recognition finds its soil and existence in the past, present and future, which is encapsulated within the African and African-American “ritual,

¹²⁶ Ellen G. White, *Story of Redemption* (Washington, DC: Review And Herald Publishing Association, 1947), 22.

¹²⁷ Augustine, *City of God* (New York: Image of Crown Publishing Group, 1958), 2-4.

because time progresses counterclockwise to the time of the ancestors.”¹²⁸ The culture of Black America church worship, vertically or horizontally, does in fact manifest itself in three main categories which are analogous in the Black church – the sacred, the secular, and the profane. Of course the cultural and sometimes ethnic acceptance of Black religious music, along with its ancestral underpinnings, may at times challenge one’s bigotry in the form of ethnocentrism; on the other hand it may also affirm one’s acceptance or adaptation in the realm of ethnorelativism.

¹²⁸ Jon Michael Spencer, *Theological Music*, 6.

SECTION B

MUSICAL IDENTITY:

MULTICULTURALISM AS RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Chapter 3

INTERCULTURAL TRAINING IN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Religious education to be intentional should possess multicultural instruction.

Multicultural instruction to be intentional should possess pedagogy that helps one to recognize their *cultural fluency* and their *conflict fluency*.¹²⁹ I contend that religious education in musical identity is most effective when cultural differences are recognizable and celebrated. Each one of us is grounded in the stories of our past, our present, and our future. The frames of our formative years as children, when the world was colorful with verdure and scratches on our knees, remind us of a particular experience during a time of childhood discovery, with musics that enhance the mood. The matriculation of the wisdom stories as young adults remind us of the rough terrain that we encountered, going over ‘fools hill’ – a time of adolescence. Perhaps these experiences may have informed those entities in our lives that have become cultural, where our beliefs, values, and behaviors are formed, as Bennet describes;¹³⁰ some were good, and some were not so good. A natural consequence of our individual culture and individuation may in fact inform the fluency of our personal conflicts. If we choose to ignore the experiences of the past – good, bad, or not so bad (as our conflict fluency)¹³¹ – we may never discern why we form certain biases for good or for bad, or why the conflict.

Our religious belief systems are often impacted by our likes and dislikes, and manifest themselves individually or collectively, perhaps creating tensions that spill over into how we contradict and protect our idiosyncrasies. This is seen within many corporate entities of church

¹²⁹ Lebaron and Pillay, *Conflict Across Cultures*, 1-7.

¹³⁰ Bennett, “Intercultural Communication,” 42.

¹³¹ Lebaron and Pillay, *Conflict Across Cultures*, 12.

governance. And yet one may ask, ‘Where is the pedagogy for training and measurement in cultural sensitivity?’

Intercultural Training

Janet Bennett and Michael Paige have created a training document for cultural sensitivity, officially titled “Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity.”¹³² The creators of the document describe it:

The Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity is a framework that explains the development of increasing sophistication in our experience and navigation of differences. This model begins with three *ethnocentric* stages, in which our own culture is experienced as central to reality in some particular way. The latter three stages of the model are termed *ethnorelative*, in which our own culture is viewed in the context of other cultures.

Multicultural training is imperative in the interrelationships of musical identities. Once the trainees are able to recognize where they are in the model, and accept their ethnocentric or ethnorelative stages of development, it will be so much easier to experience the concepts put forth in Michelle Lebaron and Venashri Pillay’s *Conflict Across Cultures: A Unique Experience of Bridging Differences*.¹³³

Differences appear many times in three dimensions of conflict: material, symbolic, and relational.¹³⁴ In the world of religious denominations there seems to be a presence of dogmatism in which the hierarchy possesses a presence of ethnocentrism, fueled by a theology or an ideology that is partial to a certain musical design. I see this design as the three-dimensional compendium of the material, the symbolism, and the relational. I contend that the genesis for

¹³² Bennett and Paige, *Training Design for Intercultural Learning*, 43.

¹³³ Lebaron and Pillay, *Conflict Across Cultures*, 2-7.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 7.

correcting the conflict must be addressed, at least initially, in the material, symbolism, and relational aspects. Perhaps the question to ask is foundational and historical to the antecedents of one's history, geographical location, and cult. At the root, it is the cult, those who were ancestral to the antecedents who braved the early terrain of our present culture, who developed the materials, the symbols and those relationships that we hold as very dear. Sigmund Mowinckel, *Psalms in Israel's Worship*, asks the questions: "Who are the men who are here pouring out their hearts and in whose words we are still doing the same? When did they live, under what conditions did they strive and suffer, sorrow and rejoice? What have they experienced, and what have they to tell us of their faith and hope and of the reality on which that faith and hope are founded?"¹³⁵ This is just one context of those who bequeath to us such images of ourselves, and our connections.¹³⁶ The image of the rainbow is a compendium of different colors that exist in close proximity to each other; all of the colors are emphatically illuminated in their individual differences, and yet they are one rainbow.

Lebaron and Pillay make strong mention of South Africa's cultural declaration, *ubuntu*, meaning "I am because we are." And to that they say, "From this image, we remember that unity is not uniformity or sameness, but harmony in the midst of diversity." Musical identity is not only an individuation of oneness, but a collectivity of many as one, who celebrate the diversity of cultural and conflict fluency. When I speak of identity, I am amending the formless and formed self and his/her individuation, which in kinship is adhesive to that second or secondary phase of the kinship: "collective group, organization, religious organization, political

¹³⁵ Sigmund Mowinckel, *The Psalms in Israel's Worship* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2004), 1, 2.

¹³⁶ Lebaron and Pillay, *Conflict Across Cultures*, 2, 3.

ideology, or culture that proves and amplifies one's identity."¹³⁷ The material of cultural and conflict fluency is nothing more than the location for much needed change. In this document my thesis points to needed [musical] changes in the music policies, structures, systems, rules, or agreements of the hierarchy of the General Conference of SDA Church organization. The point of conflict, the *material*, has to do with the bias of the hierarchy in its preference for European 'forms of music' and 'forms in music' as the standard and preference for corporate worship, while excluding those ethnic or Africanized 'forms of music' and 'forms in music' that are not in keeping with the standards of music excellence.

The 'forms of music' and 'forms in music' are in point of fact the symbols and musical symbols of a culture, whether they are European or Africanized. Thus, in this context of inter-cultural religious education, it would be well to peer into the lens of religion and how symbols are defined within that context.

Michael V. Angrosino, *Culture of The Sacred: Exploring the Anthropology of Religion*, quotes American anthropologist Clifford Geertz:

A religion is a system of symbols which acts to establish powerful, pervasive, and long lasting moods and motivations in [human beings] by formulating conceptions of a general order of existence and clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the moods and motivations seem uniquely realistic.¹³⁸

Michelle Lebaron and Venashri Pillay agree that symbols or the "symbolic level" bring significance, not only "to people's identities, values, and world views," but to their language and the expression of their language.¹³⁹ Perhaps an example of the symbolic nature of a concert pipe

¹³⁷ Danesi and Perron, *Analyzing Cultures*, 29, 30.

¹³⁸ Agrosino, *Culture of the Sacred*, 6, 7.

¹³⁹ Lebaron and Pillay, *Conflict Across Cultures*, 20, 21.

organ, and the symbolic nature of an African drum would be appropriate to amplify the sacrality of the two. “The pipe organ was most prominent from 1600 1750 (when it was known as the “King of instruments”) but is still in wide use today, particularly in religious services.”¹⁴⁰

Conversely, “There are two main groups of percussive instruments. Firstly there are the idiophones, where the sound created by the rhythm making comes from beating, scraping and shaking naturally sonorous materials. The other group of percussive instruments is the membrano phones. They are what are generally known as drums. These are characterized by stretching a skin (membrane) over a bowl . . . which may act as a resonator when the skin is stretched on it.”¹⁴¹

Because symbols are representations of high values and identification, Clifford Geertz hyphenates symbols with systems, or *system of symbols*.¹⁴² Geertz sees the system of symbols as a way to “establish *moods* and *motivations* or a certain frame of mental thinking that moves people to action, and perhaps compels them to some type of action.

Eileen Southern highlights symbols of aesthetic representations – Negro slaves as they are aesthetically expressed in their spirituals in her book, *Music of Black Americans: A History*. Generations from one to another “sang and passed along these melodic symbols” through “their oral transmission. This adaption from person to person of symbolic utterances known as the ‘Negro spiritual’ caused the music [to take] on a different form than it originally had.”¹⁴³ “Usually the composer resorted ‘consciously or unconsciously using three options in his/her

¹⁴⁰ Roger Kamien, *Music an Appreciation* (Boston, MA: McGraw Hill Higher Education, 2008), 24.

¹⁴¹ Otto Karolyi, *Traditional African & Oriental Music* (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1998), 26.

¹⁴² Agrosino, *Culture of the Sacred*, 7.

¹⁴³ Eileen Southern, *Music of Black Americans: A History* (New York, NY: Norton & Company, 1971), 132.

adaptations: (1) improvise upon a song already in existence; (2) combine material from several old songs to make the new one; or (3) compose the song entirely of new materials.”¹⁴⁴ This symbolic identity of instantaneous music composition was a part of the collective and individual material composition, which reconnected them in spirit and imagination to their nostalgic homeland, Africa. As music in Africa is functional, songs of this region are reflective of how melodies of slave songs are manifested as ‘variations on a theme’. These symbols of aesthetic representations were directly attributive to sacred relationships that grew out of their system of symbols. Their collective commitments to the preservation of their beliefs in their system of symbols became a nexus in the secondary phase of what Danesi and Perron call their kinship. The preachments of the songs sung were amplified by the preacher and/or the deacon. The messages sung always had applications that were stressed by the preacher and the deacon. This particular type of spiritual was known as the *homiletic spiritual*.¹⁴⁵ It seems that “Black preachers,” says Southern, “took serious the admonition of Dr. Isaac Watts, who said: Ministers are to cultivate gifts of preaching and prayer through study and diligence; they ought also to cultivate the capacity of composing spiritual songs and exercise it along with the other parts of worship, preaching and prayer.”¹⁴⁶ One can readily imagine the symbol aesthetic representations of not only lyrical syntax, but the melodic syntax of this song. The jubilee of Negro slaves was frothed with syllabic sounds where each word uttered was transmitted on the musical note, which served as its transport. A particular note transmitting the word of the singer became a tone that characterized the phenomena of the symbol. The scale system was the pentatonic tone system or

¹⁴⁴ Southern, *Music of Black Americans*, 172.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 17.

five consecutive notes, with one skip between the third degree of the scale and the fifth degree, resulting in a quasi-oriental or Asian sound. For an example: G, A, B (skip), D, E ascending / E, D, (skip) B, A, G descending. This was a notable tonal configuration of identity among Negro slaves. These symbols were and are the transport of stories that elicit values, behaviors, and beliefs.

The African-American Religion

Finding Christian identity has to be the initial context for African-American religious dialogue. The non-negotiable prerequisite for this dialogue is love. The two great commandments of Jesus are grounded in His law of love that “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart; and the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22: 37, 39).

The African-American Religion in North America brings its own problems within white American dialogue of encounters. Perhaps this religion is fueled by misrepresentation, immoral assumptions, predispositions, and the scholarly absence of *a phenomenological method* [that] “is, in effect the technical term for the process referred to as *describing with critical empathy*.”¹⁴⁷

David W. Wills states emphatically that the best way to relate the story of the United States’ religious past “is to center it on the theme of *pluralism* and *toleration*—the existence of religious variety in America and the degree to which it has (or has not) been tolerated and even affirmed.”¹⁴⁸ In the past, African-American religion and studies about this religion have been

¹⁴⁷ Douglas Pratt, *Being Open, Being Faithful: The Journey of Interreligious Dialogue* (Geneva: World of Churches Publications, 2014), 8, 9.

¹⁴⁸ David W. Wills, “Central Themes of American Religious History: Pluralism, Puritanism, and the Encounter of Black and White” in *African American Religion: Interpretive Essays in History and Culture*, ed. Timothy E. Fulop and Albert J. Raboteau (London: Routledge, 1997), 9.

approached more from an anthropological and an ethnomusicological perspective, more than a religious or theological perspective.¹⁴⁹

Charles H. Long presents three interrelated perspectives from his angle of perception as a historian of religion. He refers to them as *symbolic images* and *methodological principles*:

- A. Africa as historical reality and religious image
- B. The involuntary presence of the Black community in America
- C. The experience and symbol of God in the religious experience of blacks.¹⁵⁰

Following is a condensed description of these perspectives:

A. Africa as historical reality and religious image

- The African language was indeed a very present reality in the Americas. Long cites the presence of the African language in South America (Brazil), the United States, and the Atlantic Islands. Today Africans still speak their native language in Brazil. While South America remained friendly to most Africanisms, the United States did not.
- African slaves remained persistent with their shout songs, African rhythms, and African dances.
- Slaves were known to have secret meetings down in the woods. As Long put it, “It was obvious that these meetings were not the practice of the master’s religion. They were related to what the slaves themselves called *conjuring*, and the connotation reminds one of Voodoo rites in Haiti.”¹⁵¹

B. The Involuntary Presence of the Black Community In America

- Long sheds more light on “the importance of the involuntary structure of the religious meaning. [He states] elsewhere the importance of the involuntary structure of the religious consciousness in the terms of oppugnancy. In the case of the slaves, America

¹⁴⁹ Charles Long, “Perspectives for a Study of African-American Religion in the United States” in *African American Religion: Interpretive Essays in History and Culture*, ed. Timothy F. Fulop and Albert J. Raboteau (London: Routledge, 1997), 22-35.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 26.

presented a bizarre reality, not simply because of the novelty of a radical change of status and culture, but equally because their presence as slaves pointed to a radical contradiction within the dominant culture itself.”¹⁵² Slaves existing and refining their ability to shift between *assimilation* (“the process of resocialization that seeks to replace one’s original worldview with that of the host culture,” and *adaptation* (“the process whereby one’s worldview is expanded to include behavior and values appropriate to the host culture”),¹⁵³ developed a religious consciousness, posits Long, that resulted in certain “cultural forms that had to be understood from the point of view of the creativity of the transforming process itself.”

- Long sees the Negro spiritual as a significant example of the slaves’ religious consciousness:

He’s so high, you can’t get over him

He’s so low, you can’t get under him

He’s so round, you can’t get around him

You got to go right through the door.

- These are some of the symbols that fall in the cult of those antecedents who developed their religious consciousness.
- Long posits, “Over and over again this image has ebbed and flowed in the religious consciousness. It has found expression in music, dance, and political theorizing.”¹⁵⁴
- Many times in the Black community there were expressions that became very personal, with God being (in the oral tradition) in the first person, regardless of the chosen narratives.

C. The Experience and Symbol of God

- Many of Charles Long’s interpretations of the experiencing of the holy within the community were expressed within the folk tradition of the community. For instance, he explained, “I mean an oral tradition which exists in its integrity as an oral tradition, the writing down of which is a concession to scholarship.”¹⁵⁵ The sources that Long selected found their origin in slave stories and sermons, “the words and music of spirituals and the

¹⁵² Long, “Perspectives for a Study,” 27.

¹⁵³ Bennett, “Intercultural Communication,” 24.

¹⁵⁴ Long, “Perspectives for a Study,” 28.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 29-30.

blues, the cycle of Brer Rabbit, and High John the Conqueror stories.”¹⁵⁶ Long stresses the significance of the materials, and how they inspire a range of “religious meanings” to what he calls “Trickster transformer hero, to High Gods.”¹⁵⁷ Needless to say, the biblical imagery was always foundational to the slave as a confirmation that if God could bring deliverance to the children of Israel from their Egyptian conquerors, he could certainly deliver the slave. This was what Long called “the archetype which enabled him to live with promise.”¹⁵⁸ This kind of God, an intervention deity, was for the community a connection with reality. Long provides a slave narrative, which he refers to as “a norm of self-criticism, which was not derived from those who enslaved them.”¹⁵⁹

- Long offers an example of the narrative:

When I was very small my people thought I was going to die. Mama used to tell my sister that I was puny and that she didn’t think that she would be able to raise me. I used to dream nearly all the time and see all kinds of wild looking animals. I would nearly always get scared and nervous.

Sometime later I got heavy one day and began to die. For days I couldn’t eat, I couldn’t sleep; even the water I drank seemed to swell in my mouth. A voice said to me one day, “Nora you haven’t done what you promised.” And again it said, “You saw the sun rise, but you shall die before it goes down.” I began to pray. I was making up my bed. A light seemed to come down from heaven, and it looked like it just split me open from my head to my foot. A voice said to me, “Ye are freed and free indeed. My son set you free. Behold, I give you everlasting life.”¹⁶⁰

The example Long offers is denuded of any protracted thesis of philosophical or theological rhetoric. It is truly an experiential testimonial of a God to slave consciousness that served as a religious transforming and transfixing reality. The obvious question is situated somewhere between the ‘experiential symbols’ or in some cases, ‘symbolology’, and the meanings

¹⁵⁶ Long, “Perspectives for a Study,” 29-30.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., 27-30.

of the musical derivatives that are present today, including the ‘forms of music’ and the ‘forms in music’.

Why Music, Meaning, and Musical Meaning?

Are there religio-musical languages that cry for indigenous discourse in the Christian community? I do not claim for myself any original credit on questioning this subject, as I first saw a hybrid of this subject, authored by Philip Bohlman, *Is All Music Religious?*¹⁶¹ That said, I am inspired to peer through my own lens regarding the significance of those musics, born out of religious consciousness and worshipful intent. I contend that music, meaning, and musical meaning, when used as symbolizing objects in worship in one’s belief system, are legitimate. What is needed in any conflict resolution is the breath of flexibility and the spirit of non-judgment to ascertain a modicum of understanding. Michell Lebaron and Venashri Pillay discuss this issue:

Resolving this tension between cultural and religious practices is more than just a legal matter—it requires the flexibility of seeing the world from inside the skin of others if only to understand how their ways of being make sense to them. Flexibility asks that we remain open to difference as we encounter others. The capacity for flexibility means suspending judgment and perceiving with a spirit of inquiry. Suspending judgment is not to abandon our beliefs or values, but to create a space for curiosity inside ourselves and between us and others.¹⁶²

I remember once being curious about the melodic prayers that many of my Islamic brothers were praying, and how my curiosity was so stimulated that I inquired about the music they use, only to find that the those modalities are not music at all to them as in the West. But they have, according to Bohlman, oral meanings through melodic expressions that have meaning.

¹⁶¹ Philip Bohlman, “Is All Music Religious?” in *Theomusicology: A Special Issue of Black Sacred Music*, ed. Jon M. Spencer (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1994), 11.

¹⁶² Lebaron and Pillay, *Conflict Across Cultures*, 114.

The “word of god, of ‘allah’, revealed to us through the prophet Muhammad, embodied by the Qur’an, and expressed through the melodic mode, the subtle inflections of the voice, even the years of training and practice—all these are employed to render revelation more meaningful.”¹⁶³

This practice of modal intoning as meaning is not unique to Islam, says Bohlman; for years there have been countless theological discussions about role of music, “whether in the Counter Reformation of the sixteenth century, or in the populist movements that spawn new *bhajan* repertories in the history of Hinduism.”¹⁶⁴ It would then be well for all to remember that music is almost always a biased medium for expressing religious meaning; however, music must never be seen as a self-contained world unto itself, as a powerful aesthetic.¹⁶⁵

The context for unraveling those meanings that remain symbolic is found in the community. Every community has its own antecedents and its own cults. Those who created their indigenous symbols and became culture are the ones who echo their worshiping cries and hollers of joy and sorrow to their God. Bohlman agrees, as an ethnomusicologist, that these musics are tied to religions, their church, and their church fathers.¹⁶⁶

This is demonstrated in many German communities that live in Northern Wisconsin, where Bohlman, while doing his fieldwork for his Master’s degree, sought to witness the folk music of various German locations, only to find that the folk musical expressions of these German communities was nothing more than the hymns they sang every Sunday at church.¹⁶⁷ Bohlman then deduces:

¹⁶³ Bohlman, *Is All Music Religious?* 8.

¹⁶⁴ Bohlman, “Is All Music Religious?” 11.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 12.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

The reality is that German-American music, in probably the most intensively German rural area of the United States, is religious music. Its content is religious, its social function is religious, its meaning to the community is religious. But it is also folk music and popular music, concert music and classical music. The sense of community and ethnic group, then, were inseparable from the music—that German-Americans from northern Wisconsin shared to a remarkable degree.¹⁶⁸

Bohlman cites the work of “Chicago’s Japanese *taiko* drumming ensemble, for example, [which] centers its activities” in the neighboring area of the Buddhist Temple where their concerts are performed, and yet one would not refer to their music as religious music. However, it is suggested that if this ensemble were to “sever its association with the core of Japanese religious activities in Chicago,” they would cease to function.¹⁶⁹

This factoid also resonates within the secular and sacred music of African-Americans. It is almost poetic to hear the media interview an African-American artist and without hesitation the question is asked: “Where did you learn to sing like that?” The usual answer is, “I learned to sing like I do in church, on Sunday morning. And yet, the Black church context is really a continuance of what I term the daily praise shout for African-Americans. All of this rests on the bedrock of freedom in America. Otherwise the Black church community has not parked in this world, as their final resting place. For this community, there has to be something better than the thralldom that continues known as “the new Jim Crow.” Today as in yesteryear, freedom and heaven are the codifications for freedom and emancipation. Jon Michael Spencer quotes James Cone in *Protest & Praise: Sacred Music of Black Religion*:

. . . freedom is obviously a structure of, and a movement in historical existence. It is black slaves accepting the risk and burden of self affirmation, of liberation in history.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 9.

¹⁶⁹ Bohlman, “Is All Music Religious?” 11.

That is the meaning of the phrase, “And go home to my Lord and be free.” In this context, freedom is eschatological. It is anticipation of freedom, a vision of a new heaven and a new earth. Black slaves recognized that human freedom is transcendental—that is, a constituent of the future—which made it impossible to identify humanity exclusively with meager attainment in history.¹⁷⁰

Phillip Bohlman has stated unapologetically that the content [of German-American music] “is religious, its social function is religious...and at the same time it is folklore.”¹⁷¹

Hymn books and choruses of the oral tradition are those cherished modalities, cries, hollers, hand clapping, literal and figurative, “*A Mighty Fortress is Our God...*” – these are the songs of the people that package their stories. They are the songs that people preserve about their God. These songs encapsulate their meaning, music, and musical meaning. But how are these songs preserved in their worship?

Liturgical Music: The Song of the People

The *Song of Moses*¹⁷² is replete with symbols and stories of his people! The *Song of Moses* is indeed, the *song of the people*. It is the song of the people because it is the anthem of their middle passage from 400 years of bondage to the Promised Land. I contend that the *song of the people*, (born out of the *Song of Moses*) is a non-negotiable part of one’s collective or individual musical identity. It is the people’s inspired and sometimes instantaneous scripted or unscripted response, chronicling the acts of their God as He liberates them from their bondage, across their middle passage, and delivers them to their promised land, which their God has

¹⁷⁰ James Cone, *God of the Oppressed* (1997): 11, quoted in Jon Michael Spencer, *Protest & Praise: Sacred Music of Black Religion* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990), 25.

¹⁷¹ Bohlman, “Is All Music Religious,” 11.

¹⁷² *Nelson Study Bible*. Exodus 15, New King James Version (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 125, 126.

prepared for them. The Bible (Exodus 15) describes the Hebrew's God as a *man of war* . . . who has *triumphed gloriously*, . . . *excellent, of mercy, you have redeemed*, . . . *your holy habitation*, . . . *Your inheritance*, . . . *For Your own dwelling*.

Bernard Lang, *The Hebrew God: Portrait of an Ancient Deity*, drawing on Dumézil's work, describes the Hebrew God:

The unexpected encounter with the oeuvre of Dumézil gave me the idea of describing the Hebrew God as the Lord of the three gifts of *wisdom*, *victory*, and *life*. From the notion of the three gifts it was only a small step to developing the structure for the present work: a portrait of the Hebrew God in five images, with each image sketched in a section of its own.¹⁷³

Lang describes the first image of God as the giver of wisdom, the second image of God, as the Lord of war, and the other three “as the creator and sustainer of the life of animals, humans, and plants.”¹⁷⁴ Dumézil's description of these three fundamental mandates along with the “three divine functions” or domains can be summarized as follows:

The First Function: sovereignty and the sacred. In society, ultimate leadership is in the hands of teachers, jurists, and priests; in the divine world, it is in the hands of a father of the gods—for the Greeks, Zeus, and for the Romans, Jupiter (whose name means, etymologically, “Zeus father”). In India, two gods occupy the supreme rank: Mitra and Varuna, representing the divine lawyer and the celestial magician.

The Second Function: war or, more generally, physical power and bravery in fighting. In human society, this duty or “function” is assigned to the military commander (often corresponding with the warrior king) and to the army. In the realm of the gods, a heavenly army or a Lord of War make fighting their business: the Roman god Mars and the Indian god Indra are good examples.

The Third Function: life, supported by fertility and food, and culminating in prosperity and wealth. In social life, the task of producing and supplying food falls to the peasants and the lower classes, for premodern societies derive their wealth primarily from farming

¹⁷³ Bernard Lang, *Hebrew God: Portrait of an Ancient Deity* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2002), 4.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.

and livestock husbandry—from their crops and the products of their flocks and herds.¹⁷⁵

These are the teachers, jurists, and priests in the divine world – the forerunners of those teachers, jurists, and priests of today. This is how they work and how they worship. The Hebrew God, the God of the Sinai, the Lord of war and victory, has prepared for those succeeding nations, a work for the people, which can be interpreted as the work of the people. Without getting into one's style of ritual, I am convinced that Dumezil's description of the "divine" activity provides for a divine dialogue; a *Gottesdienst* with a human response, "God's service and our service to God"¹⁷⁶ – a liturgy or leitourgia, as James F. White, *Introduction to Christian Worship* posits:

Too often confused with smells and bells (ceremonial), "Liturgy," like service, has a secular origin. It comes from the Greek *leitourgia*, composed from words for work (*ergon*) and people (*laos*). In ancient Greece, a liturgy was a public work performed for the benefit of the city or state...Paul speaks of the Roman authorities literally as "liturgist [*leitourgoi*] of God" (Rom. 13:6) and of himself as "liturgist [*leitourgon*] of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles" (Rom. 15:16 literal trans.).

Liturgy, then, is a work performed by the people for the benefit of others. In other words, it is the quintessence of the priesthood of believers that the whole priestly community of Christians shares.¹⁷⁷

Sharing suggests giving a portion, which circuitously takes us back where we began, to sing the *Song of Moses* and/or the song of the people liturgy, though the term was not used then.

The biblical narrative in the King James Version reminds us of the instrumentation used during the Song of Moses. "Then Miriam the prophetess, the sister of Aaron, took the timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her with timbrels and with dances....(Exodus 15:20)"

¹⁷⁵ Ibid.

¹⁷⁶ James F. White, *Introduction to Christian Worship* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000), 25.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 26.

Of course we know that many of the instruments which the Hebrews brought out of Egypt were in fact, Egyptian. Their praise and worship was instantaneous! There was no temple, synagogue, or church building; yet there was praise and worship out in the open.

Gwen Kennedy Neville and John H. Westerhoff, III, *Learning Through Liturgy*, discuss two kinds of liturgy:

Two kinds of liturgy can be found in every culture—the formal ritual and the informal or *folk liturgies*. Formal worship in the strict sense and highly regularized ritual in preindustrial societies are considered to belong to the formal liturgical tradition associated with the practice of religion. Folk liturgy, on the other hand, could be identified as the set sequences of daily weekly, or other recurrent regularized forms of prescribed behavior for certain events, not necessarily religious.¹⁷⁸

Neville and Westerhoff cite folk liturgy that inheres a frequent set of prescriptive behaviors for a dinner party in [their] own society, which included “timing, manner of serving, appropriate conversation topics, categories of food normally served, type of seating (at a table or on the floor), arrangement of people at the meal, the dress of these people, the way they hold their forks and knives, and which fork they use in what order, and many other specific details that are understood by all the participants within any one cultural setting.”¹⁷⁹

Jon Michael Spencer, *Protest & Praise: Sacred Music of Black Religion*, brings focus to the primary musical instrument, the drum, and its primacy. For the African, the drum was a sacred instrument that “possessed” supernatural powers that allowed it to help summon their gods to their community. The origin of the African drum and its construction moved far from the

¹⁷⁸ Gwen Kennedy Neville and John H. Westerhoff, III. *Learning Through Liturgy* (New York, NY: The Seabury Press, 1978), 29.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid.

makers and enveloped its spirituality.¹⁸⁰ Chief Fela Sowande posits his explanation regarding the process:

African musical materials and styles... have mythological origins... Among the Yorubas of Nigeria (and presumably in other areas of Africa also), the very first step in making of a drum is the ceremony which placates the spirit inhabiting the tree that is to be cut down for the wood from which the drum frame will be subsequently carved. Furthermore, the Yorubas say that tree must be one that has grown near the village, and is accustomed to hearing human voices will be unsatisfactory, for its wood will be “dumb” as a drum frame. Here is the actual spot at which the drummer communes with the patron deity of drumming. The drummer who neglects his regular communion with his patron deity of drumming will find either that his drum goes to pieces or he will be constantly out of employment.¹⁸¹

The *song of the people* is a song for the people that is not only a religious expression, but in fact is sacrosanct. Stories, testaments, songs, dances, musical instruments, and chants are all constituents of the preserved and revered *song of the people*, that is, the liturgy, the leitourgia, the work of the people. It is “a work performed by the people for the benefit of others.”¹⁸² The question is now, How does this fit within the definition of *art* societally? This will be answered in Chapter 4.

¹⁸⁰ Jon Michael Spencer, *Protest & Praise: Sacred Music of Black Religion* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1990), 135, 136.

¹⁸¹ Fela Sowande, “Role of Music in Traditional African Society,” in *African Music* ed. UNESCO (Paris: La Revue Musicale, 1972): 64, quoted in Spencer, *Protest & Praise*, 135, 136.

¹⁸² White, *Introduction to Christian Worship*, 26.

Chapter 4

THE SOUND OF SPIRITUAL ART: A FORMATION OF LISTENING

It is said by the Apostle Paul that “*faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God* (Romans 10:17).” If I hear a word and pay attention, I will not only acknowledge what I hear, I will be informed by what I hear. I contend that the spoken word is the catalyst of sight and sound, the context of focus. It is the presence of what is heard and what is seen! It is vibration!¹⁸³ It is “sight and hearing!” It is “audio and visual.” It is Nommo!

Nommo, says Ronald Jemal Stephens (cited by Spencer), *The Three Waves of Contemporary Rap Music*, is “the supernatural power of the spoken word.”¹⁸⁴ It is what is seen, and what is heard! It is pulsation and vibration! It is pulse driven by focus! Though it is a directed focus, it still has a felt sense. It is also focus driven by compassion! I argue that the spoken word, sight and sound, focus, pulse and pulsation, divine encounter, transcendence, unsaying, highjacking, and silence elucidates our focusing, as key to a life of compassion, which is art. The question? What do these terms mean and how do they impact our compassionate hearing?

Definition of the Spoken Word

The “*Spoken Word*” and the “*spoken word*” are definite cousins within the repertoire of “the supernatural power of the spoken word.” The *Spoken Word* as a colloquium regarding the biblical narrative as used by those of the Christian tradition and versed by those who accept Jesus

¹⁸³ Hazrat Inayat Khan, *Music of Life*, 38, 39.

¹⁸⁴ Ronald Jemal Stephens, “Three Waves of Contemporary Rap Music,” *Black Sacred Music: A Journal of Theomusicology* 5, no. 1 (spring) (1991), 25-40, quoted in Jon Michael Spencer, *Emergency of Black and the Emergence of Rap* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1991), 25, 26.

Christ as their Creator, inscribes certifiable meaning to those in the West who worship the God of the Sinai, or the Son of God. The supernatural power of the “*spoken word*,” that has its origin within the rhyme and rhythm “that appear throughout African-American speech, literature, music, and dance are essential parts of nommo.” Ronald Jemal Stephens posits:

Nommo creates changes in attitude. It creates unity, identity and atmosphere in which everyone involved in the communication event can relate. The creators of nommo – preachers, politicians, poets, musicians, and rappers, and their expressive performances involve audiences in the communication event.¹⁸⁵

These rhythmic elements yield *pulse* and *pulsation* not only in the literal sense but in the figurative sense, alluding to Frank Roger’s *Practicing Compassion*.¹⁸⁶ Compassionate manifestations experienced through Divine Encounter promise a connection that bequeaths blessings through transcendence. The essence of the *nephesh*¹⁸⁷ or the psyche (the breath of the soul) connects us to the inner man/woman who joyfully participates in the mystical speech of *unsaying*. Michael A. Sells, *Mystical Languages of Unsayings* explains:

[The] mode of discourse begins with the *aporia*—the unresolvable dilemma—of transcendence. The transcendent must be beyond names, ineffable. In order to claim that the transcendent is beyond names, however, I must give it a name, “transcendent.” Any statement of ineffability, “X is beyond names,” generates the *aporia* that the subject must be named (as X) in order for us to affirm that it is beyond names.¹⁸⁸

Our unfamiliarity with our unconscious selves leaves us vulnerable to the unwanted distractions of feeling naked or vulnerable to blasphemy or the highjacking of unwanted thoughts,

¹⁸⁵ Stephens, “Three Waves of Contemporary Rap Music,” quoted in Spencer, *Emergency of Black*, 25, 26.

¹⁸⁶ Frank Rogers, Jr., *Practicing Compassion*, 2.

¹⁸⁷ *Seventh-day Adventists Believe... Biblical Exposition of Fundamental Doctrines* (Hagerstown, MD: Review and Herald Publishing Association, 1982), 81.

¹⁸⁸ Michael A. Sells, *Mystical Languages of Unsayings* (Chicago, IL: The University of Chicago Press, 1994), 2.

particularly in times of spiritual focus or concentration. Knowing how to focus, be creative, or succumb to the subjective is an art that germinates with practice.

The World of Listening

The domain of *musical identity* compels one to listen not only to notes, words, or loud and soft phraseologies; but to the story, the laughter, the cry, and perhaps the appeal for all listeners to understand the story. I argue that the story being told (regardless of genera) is an experiential story. It is important for all listeners to remember that “when artistic objects [including musics] are separated from both conditions of origin and operation in experience, a wall is built around them that renders almost opaque their general significance with which esthetic theory deals.”¹⁸⁹

As students of history, we all listen out for the utterances of voices from long ago, who speak to us via the printed page, audio books, art etched in museums, music, or the word interpreted in the King James Version, the Septuagint, or some phase of the oral tradition.¹⁹⁰

John S. Mogabgab cites Wendy M. Wright, *Desert Listening*, who suggests, “If we listen carefully to their words, words uttered over fifteen centuries ago, we learn that these desert dwelling ascetics were engaged in a life of intense listening.”¹⁹¹ She further puts it this way:

Journeying through the treacherous maze of “worldly” temptations was not over when they left the world. In the desert they discovered that the image of the world was engraved deep in their spirit. Thus the greater and more difficult journey was not from

¹⁸⁹ Dewey, “Art as Experience,” 203.

¹⁹⁰ Wendy M. Wright, *Desert Listening*, (1994): 7, quoted in John S. Mogabgab, *Weavings: A Journal of the Christian Spiritual Life* (Nashville, TN: Upper Room Books, 1994), 8-16

¹⁹¹ Wright, *Desert Listening*, 8.

the cities of the Roman Empire to the solitudes of Egypt, Syria, or Palestine; it was through the crooked pathways of the heart.¹⁹²

She further states that “we can become listeners to each other’s hearts.”¹⁹³ Of course, we are constantly seeking to discern what we are hearing in our hearts. The conversation begins in our spirit: ‘*who am I listening to?*’ ‘*What is your name?*’ ‘*Do I want to talk to you at this moment?*’ ‘*No!*’ ‘*I do not want to hear from you!*’ These are the desert distractions that compete for our hearts in such a way that we have to learn to discern the spiritual voices from the negative voices of our past. And yet to accomplish such a fete, says Wright, we have “to be keen listeners.”¹⁹⁴ This means, ‘*Pay attention...*’

Listening to the Spirits

The spirits within us speak so much in cacophony that it can never be entirely deafening to our psyches. Wright posits:

The language of the spirits in the desert is baroque and perhaps alienating to our present day sensibilities. We are more likely to give psychological interpretation to our inner voices than to attribute them to demonic sources. Nor do we tend to be as mistrustful of fantasy or thoughts as the ancient ascetics seem to have been. Be this as it may, it remains true that we, like them, must wrestle with the conflicting claims, desires, and values that confront us from the outside and the inside. And this involves intense listening.¹⁹⁵

The power of *discernment* in Christian thought challenges are ability to decipher the vocal authenticity of the spirits that speak to us in cacophony. Ignatius of Loyola, a Spaniard and a pioneer of the Jesuits put his focus on internal “movements” that he defined as *consolation and*

¹⁹² Wright, *Desert Listening*, 8.

¹⁹³ Ibid., 8-16.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., 9-16.

desolation, believing that “the spirit of light (God’s Spirit) presented itself as hard and forbidding (as desolation) while the spirit of darkness was attractive and compelling (consolation).”¹⁹⁶ God has a way of “stripping and self-emptying,” says Wright.¹⁹⁷ The discernment of the 17th century Quaker practice of *silent listening* is congruent with what Wright refers to as “desert discernment” that we can value today.¹⁹⁸ Not only is this present today within the teaching practices of the early Quakers that one’s listening is primarily receptive, but does not also the biblical narrative of the “*Spoken Word*,” which admonishes us to ‘Let the words of our mouths and the meditations of our hearts be acceptable in [his] sight,’ remind us of the imperative presence of silent listening. Perhaps there is also a personal challenge for both those of the “*Spoken Word*” and those of the “*spoken word*” to remember that listening to the spirits cannot be practiced, and yet the reality of their presence is real and non-negotiated. Rogers reminds us that listening and “paying attention” is an indispensable reality if you want to find your “pulse” in the world of passion and compassion – the context for inner listening.¹⁹⁹ These earlier models, says Wright, leave us with two pertinent ideas: “First, attention to the quality and direction of one’s inner affectivity is part of the art. Second, whatever one thinks, feels, or experiences is best weighed in the medium of profound silence. Spiritual listening is a complete undertaking.”²⁰⁰ Rogers also concurs that paying attention (contemplative awareness) does also bring a precondition for compassion, for compassion is a particular way of seeing others.

¹⁹⁶ Wright, *Desert Listening*, 8-16.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁹⁸ Ibid., 10.

¹⁹⁹ Rogers, Jr., *Practicing Compassion*, 27.

²⁰⁰ Wright, *Desert Listening*, 14.

Contemplative Listening

The power of contemplative listening is imperative within the Christian community. Wright posits:

Thus, listening as a spiritual discipline is related but not identical to the listening practiced in helping settings today. First and foremost, spiritual listening is a *contemplative undertaking* and not a problem solving task. It is essentially prayer. A contemplative attitude pervades the listening done by spiritual seekers. They do not seek to encounter human life as a problem to be solved or fixed but as a mystery to be entered and plumbed. Admittedly, contemplative practice does possess a mysterious formation that keeps company with creativity and discovery.²⁰¹

Harold H. Anderson, "Creativity in Perspective," seems to suggest that the characteristics of a creative person, is the person who is willing to become vulnerable to absorption and to have faith in ones blind-encounter and uncertainty, until one's conscious mind reveals the birth of a new idea.²⁰²

He continues with a number of characteristics:

. . . characteristics mentioned...desire to grow, capacity to be puzzled, awareness, spontaneity, spontaneous flexibility, adaptive flexibility, originality, divergent thinking, learning, openness to new experience, no boundaries, permeability of boundaries, yielding, readiness to yield, abandoning, letting go, being born every day, discarding the irrelevant, ability to toy with elements, change of activity persistence, hard work, composition, decomposition, recomposition, differentiation, integration, being at peace with the world, harmony, honesty, humility, enthusiasm, integrity, inner maturity, self actualizing, skepticism, boldness, faith, courage, willingness to be alone, *I see, I feel, I think*, gust for temporary chaos, security in uncertainty, tolerance of ambiguity.²⁰³

The mysteries in contemplative reality are inherently wise and many times out of immediate grasp of our consciousness; and yet they are residential in the soil of life, ready to be

²⁰¹ Wright, *Desert Listening*, 13-16.

²⁰² Harold H. Anderson, "Creativity in Perspective," in *Creativity and Its Cultivation*, ed. Harold H. Anderson (New York, NY: Harper & Row Publishers, 1959), 238.

²⁰³ Ibid.

extracted from beneath the surface of our unconsciousness within the texture and context of ‘looking at, thinking about, and considering’. We need not grudgingly participate in contemplation unless we are willing to be pushed, sometimes shoved, jostled, puzzled, or mystified by the behavior of spiritual listening. Wright reminds us that we are encouraged “into a realm of apprehension that supposes our words, plans, schemes, and panaceas. We move into silence and into creative work of God.” Wright further reminds us:

To listen this way is to listen with heart and mind opened wide. It invites us to be changed with those to whom we listen. It exposes the limitations of our solutions, even of our questions. It sensitizes us to the ultimately mysterious way God moves incarnationally in the unique particularity of each human life. Life is not ultimately problem but mystery. To listen to its depths is finally to find oneself on one’s knees.²⁰⁴

God is the Supreme ‘Lens Crafter’ of all who see! As our Creator, He has and will continue to compensate for our farsightedness, nearsightedness, and spiritual astigmatisms. The contemplative earphones of our desert listening Wright sees as “surround[ing] the vast and multidimensional range of human experience in an embrace of radical love.”²⁰⁵ As we struggle to listen, we all fall under the influence of others’ interpretive lenses of all kinds. Therefore, as we listen to others, we should exercise sensitivity to the uniqueness that God has manifested in men and women’s lives. We should listen for how one perceives “God with us, and how one’s individuation manifests its unique nuance. We should remember that all of us are “human snowflakes,”²⁰⁶ with our unique human designs. That said, we as a species are not meant to be alike or a carbon copy of another. Wright posits:

²⁰⁴ Wright, *Desert Listening*, 14.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., 15.

²⁰⁶ Ibid.

If God truly works through the incarnational medium of the individual person, then God's presence will be shaped by the life circumstance, culture, language, personality, and history of that particular man or woman...the way we understand what we hear is strongly shaped by the interpretive schemas we carry with us. If we have given meaning to our lives through the categories of addiction and co-dependency, or feminist theory, or biblical literalism, we are likely to hear another primarily in that mode of understanding.²⁰⁷

While we applaud this empirical impetus, none of the above categories can, in Wright's estimation, "exhaust the ways we can think about our own and other's experience."²⁰⁸

Hazrat Inayat Khan, *Music of Life*, reminds us of the salience of silence:

The life absolute from which has sprung all that is felt, seen, and perceived, and into which all again merges in time, is a silent, motionless, and eternal life which among the Sufis is called *zat*. Every motion that springs forth from this silent life is a vibration and a creator of vibrations. Within one vibration are created many vibrations. As motion causes motion, so the silent life becomes active in a certain part and creates every moment more and more activity losing thereby the peace of the original silent life. It is the grade of activity of these vibrations that accounts for the various planes of existence.²⁰⁹

This includes the existence of the cosmos and its rearrangement known as the Creation Story (Genesis 1). The question! How do sound and light affect what we hear, and how do we define them?

²⁰⁷ Wright, *Desert Listening* 14.

²⁰⁸ Ibid.

²⁰⁹ Khan, *Music of Life*, 5.

Sound and Light: Two Aspects of Movement United by Harmony²¹⁰

The felt sense of ‘sound and light’ is a complete sensation that transports me into the realm of witnessing what King David may have experienced, when he mentions, “*The Heavens declare the glory of God*”... This is interpretive of what Ann Weiser Cornell and Barbara McGavin, *Radical Acceptance of Everything*, say, “... is not something that other methods teach. There is no one else, outside of [Eugene Gendlin, philosopher, psychologist and author of] *Focusing*, who is talking about this dimension of experience which is not emotion and not thought, which is subtle yet concretely felt, absolutely physically real. Felt sensing is one of the things that makes it focusing.” Cornell and McGavin further describe focusing:

Focusing is a radical departure from the usual ways we operate in our culture. When you learn “focusing”, you learn to be with your own sensations and feelings, and you discover that they have communications for you. You learn to turn toward what you are feeling with interested curiosity, rather than being caught up in feelings and acting out of them. You find out how to include and accept all sorts of inner experiences, with no need to take sides in an inner war that labels some parts of you as “bad.”²¹¹

Hazrat Inayat Khan seems to imply that there is symbioses among philosophy, science, mysticism, and esotericism, in that the peak of all knowledge even through the felt sense, “is that behind the whole of creation, behind the whole of manifestation, if there is any subtle trace of life that can be found, it is motion, it is movement, [and] it is vibration.”²¹² Khan further discusses vibrations:

Man is not only formed of vibrations but he lives and moves in them...His different moods, inclinations, affairs, successes, and failures, and all conditions of the life depend

²¹⁰ Khan, *Music of Life*, 5.

²¹¹ Ann Weiser Cornell and Barbara McGavin, *Radical Acceptance of Everything* (Berkeley, CA: Calluna Press, 2005), 14, 9.

²¹² Khan, *Music of Life*, 38.

upon a certain activity of vibrations, whether these be thoughts, emotions, or feelings ... There are two aspects of vibration, *fine* and *gross*, both containing varied degrees; some are perceived by the soul, some by the mind, and some by the eyes. What the soul perceives are the vibrations of the feelings; what the mind conceives are the vibrations of the thoughts; what the eyes see are the vibrations solidified from their ethereal state.²¹³

The entire universe suggests objective laws of rhythm that are measured between days and nights of the creative week. I cannot imagine the world without certain creative boundaries that operate within vibrations and planes of vibration, morphing into certain laws of rhythms. Kahn suggests, “If it were not for the law of rhythm...we would not have distinct forms and intelligible conditions. There is no movement which has not sound, and there is no sound which has no rhythm.”²¹⁴ Khan further comments on rhythm:

The rising and the setting of the sun, the waxing and the waning of the moon, the regular change of the tides in the sea, and the seasons as they come and go all show rhythm. It is rhythm that makes the birds fly; it is rhythm that makes the creatures of the earth walk. If we delve deeper into the science of rhythm we find that it is rhythm that causes a certain thing to be made in a certain way. If it is made triangular or square or round or five pointed, whatever geometrical form has been given to it, the reason behind its form is the rhythm of the power that has made it. It is that rhythm that is the cause of its formation.²¹⁵

The power of the “laws of rhythm” is seen as the governance of right and wrong rhythms. There are the right and wrong rhythm in *feeling*, right and wrong rhythm of *thinking*, right and wrong rhythm of *speaking*, and the right and wrong rhythm of *acting*.²¹⁶ The question! How does rhythm impact atmosphere in the felt sense?

²¹³ Khan, *Music of Life*, 5, 6.

²¹⁴ Ibid., 10.

²¹⁵ Ibid.

²¹⁶ Ibid., 11, 13.

Atmosphere

Pulse is a constant! According to Khan, pulse is capacity beat to its charged pulsations. It beats to its rhythm. Space is always waiting to be filled. Space is void of an atmosphere because it is “negative in that it allows its pulse to beat to the rhythm it is charged with, and at the same time it is positive in that it absorbs and assimilates all, sooner or later.”²¹⁷ Sometimes individuals may suggest that the atmosphere is quiet or exciting. This simply means that someone may have been present before the latter person, thus the atmosphere is simply charged with the charge of the initial individuals or collective persons, thus leaving a lingering presence.

Khan says that to define atmosphere is to declare an “atmosphere of presence and the atmosphere of absence.”²¹⁸ These vibrations are felt whether they are negative or positive. To this Cornell and McGavin posit:

In the focusing process, after you are aware of the felt sense, you then bring to it a special quality of attention. One way I like to say this is you *sit down to know it better*. I like to call this quality ‘interested curiosity.’ By bringing this interested curiosity into a relationship with the felt sense, you are open to sensing that which is there but not yet in words.²¹⁹

This process takes time. It is not magic or instant. While this process is slow and sometimes hijacked by impatience, one will sooner or later become not only “accepting but curious.”²²⁰ Cornell and McGavin also caution that expectations through this felt sense will

²¹⁷ Khan, *Music of Life*, 13, 15.

²¹⁸ Ibid., 11.

²¹⁹ Cornell and McGavin, *Radical Acceptance of Everything*, 13, 14.

²²⁰ Ibid.

bring change in its own way, that it will do something that Eugene Gendlin, philosopher and psychologist and author of *Focusing* (2007), calls “making steps.”²²¹

One of the steps can be to recognize the emphatic presence of atmosphere. We are all subject to atmosphere, and when we are pleased with this atmosphere, we take steps to maintain its felt sense. Our attraction to the delicacy of our preferred atmosphere is directly attributive to what we bring to the atmosphere.²²² Khan further comments on atmosphere this way:

. . . When a person is sitting in meditation, when he is practicing silence or repose, the atmosphere is quietening; when a person is restless, uneasy, cross or agitated, the atmosphere takes on the same rhythm. The reason for this is that the atmosphere is made of vibrations, and the life substance in it is charged with the same rate of vibrations as that of a person who happens to be there.²²³

One may ask whether the atmosphere is visible or audible. According to Khan, “all that is intelligible is audible and visible in the finer sense of these words.” The musical commentary titled “Atmosphere” was my attempt to create sounds and colors, or what Khan calls *Sound* and *Light*. What we heard in our ears and our mind was audible, and what we saw in our mind’s eye and our insight was visible. This musical atmosphere spoke in it Nommo – the supernatural power of its spoken word. I heard it, I responded to it, and I wanted it to stay with me all day long. I accepted it along with the felt sense of passion and tears, and tightness in the chest cavity.

I see new steps as changing my conduct or my behavior. The focus of my behavior is salient! Khan describes my experience: [I am] “bringing awareness into my body and inviting a sense of the ‘edge’ what’s not yet in words about all that.” I have experienced in sound and light,

²²¹ Cornell and McGavin, *Radical Acceptance of Everything*, 13, 14.

²²² Khan, *Music of Life*, 15.

²²³ Ibid.

deep listening, and my focus. [I am] “describing how that feels in my body (words, image, gesture, quality, metaphor: “what it’s like)” Better still! What holds my words, images, gestures, quality, and metaphors together? Khan offers the answers:

It is *capacity*; space offers capacity. In other words, in space a capacity is formed of an element invisible to our eyes and yet solid enough to hold the vibrations within it...It is capacity which makes the soul a soul; otherwise it would be spirit...Capacity is matter. It is not merely matter in the everyday sense of the word, for in reality all that is perceptible is matter. It is substance: even if it is the finest substance it is still a substance. That which is above substance is spirit. Spirit is the absence of matter even in its finest condition. Spirit is beyond that, and thus the finest capacity will still be a substance.²²⁴

There is a third quality that illuminates focusing [and sets it] “apart from any other method of inner awareness and personal growth; [it] is a radical philosophy of what facilitates change.”²²⁵ Cornell and McGavin explore change:

How do we change? How do we not change? If you are like many of the people who are drawn to Focusing, you probably feel *stuck* or *blocked* in one or more areas of your life. There is *something* about you, or your circumstances, or your feelings and reactions to things that you would like to change. That is very natural. But let us now contrast two ways of approaching this wish to change.²²⁶

First we must acknowledge that to make a change, we must have something to change, as we “must do something to it.” Cornell and McGavin call this the ‘Doing/Fixing way’. They refer to the other ways as ‘Be/Allowing’ way. This assumes that “change and flow is the natural course of things, and when something seems not to change, what it needs is attention awareness, with an attitude of allowing it to be as it is, yet open to its next steps.”²²⁷ The suggestion is the Being/Allowing philosophy causes us to ‘do the 360’ or turn around, challenges our

²²⁴ Khan, *Music of Life*, 20, 21.

²²⁵ Cornell and McGavin, *Radical Acceptance of Everything*, 15, 16.

²²⁶ Ibid.

²²⁷ Ibid.

expectations, and helps us to see the world quite differently.²²⁸ It brings about a newness of life – perhaps a rebirth – that is discovered by listening. As one develops one’s listening skills, it will be possible for one to hear faith from hearing, for “faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God (Romans 10:17).”

²²⁸ Cornell and McGavin, *Radical Acceptance of Everything*, 15-17.

CONCLUSION

Authentic musical identity evidences the presence of material composition that bares the “formless self.” Joan Stambaugh answers the inquiry of the formless self, which lies in Dogen, who posits the “inextricably interwoven... thought from the wisdom of Buddha: To study the Buddha way is to study the self; to study the self is to forget the self; to forget the self is to be verified by myriad dharmas; and to be verified by myriad dharmas is to drop off the body mind of the self, as well as the body mind of the other. There remains no trace of enlightenment, and one lets this traceless enlightenment come forth forever and ever.”²²⁹ This belief of the formless self points to the God within, which leads the exceptional individual on a journey that moves desperately away from the conformity of the church. Ultimately, the individuation of the formless self “means to be a separate, indivisible, whole person,” says Roberts.²³⁰ But it does come from the God within. Individuals’ identity is not formed by the social and religious conventions of the status quo. They scorn religiosity as a non-sacred distraction, preferring the directed experience of the God within. They experience the sacred and the secular through the lens of divine encounters.²³¹

As the contour of our world of cultural and musical difference evolves, the symbols of our experience become an indispensable reality. The lines between our sacred and our secular are less divisive. Our musical identity morphs into the trinary dimension that corrects our ‘cultural fluency’ and our ‘conflict fluency’, where our formed self “grows into a social context

²²⁹ Kigen Dogen, *Mystical Realist* (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 1975), 221, quoted in Joan Stambaugh, *Formless Self* (New York, NY: State University of New York Press, 1999), 1.

²³⁰ Roberts, “Improvisation, Individuation, and Immanence,” 51.

²³¹ Jon Michael Spencer, *Theomusicology*, 13.

of independence between self and others.”²³² We experience the ethnorelativism of acceptance and adaptation. Our symbols move from ethnocentric or cultural bigotry to an all-inclusive model of multiculturalism. There is no more sectarian divisiveness between the secular and the profane, as secularization is often defined as “the process whereby religious thinking, practice and institutions lose social significance.” Our liturgy gives way to “the process whereby, in the course of cultural history, languages and roles have become increasingly differentiated.”²³³

Our symbols evolve into symbology, where the sounds of acoustical pianos include electric pianos; pipe organs share liturgical space with Hammond B3 organs; timpani shares space with snare drums; trumpets share liturgical space with saxophones; European classical music as “forms of music” share liturgical space with vernacular “forms of music” or the folklore of cultural and ethnic differences; mono-cultural gives way to inter-religious space; the sectarian church is no more, as the place of corporeal worship, but it becomes a “House of Prayer for all Nations.”²³⁴ The Super Tribe, a collectivity of individuals who, although they may not all have the same tribal origins, nevertheless participate, by and large, in the signifying order of the founding or conquering . . . tribes,²³⁵ is all inclusive and adopted, based on their humanness. This is the new musical identity.

²³² Lebaron and Pillay, *Conflict Across Cultures*, 19, 58.

²³³ James Empereur, *Worship Exploring the Sacred* (Washington DC: The Pastoral Press, 1987), 1, 2.

²³⁴ Sheryl A. Kujawa Holbrook, *God Beyond Borders: Interreligious Learning Among Faith Communities* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2014), 76.

²³⁵ Danesi and Perron. *Analyzing Cultures*, 24.

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